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## Events of the Week.

THE policy of the Coalition has been further declared in a manifesto, signed by Mr. George and Mr. Law, Mr. Barnes withholding his assent, and in speeches by Mr. George and Mr. Law. The first proclaims "the knell of military autocracy" in Europe as a preliminary to setting up civil autocracy in Britain. It declares for a new Parliament "to make the peace of Europe," which the Press is not to discuss and with which Mr. George's tied House of Commons will have nothing to do. There is a vague sketch of a programme of land settlement, educational reform, housing, and "a fresh impetus" to agriculture. The question of conscription is avoided, Home Rule is postponed and made dependent on the consent of the Six Counties, which makes it impossible, and there is promise of the Reform of the House of Lords, an old Tory specific. Protection is definitely foreshadowed. A preference is to be given to the Colonies on existing duties and on any future taxes. Key industries are also to be protected, and "security" given against "unfair competition," by "dumping." The address is mere Tory democracy, and Lord Chaplin's signature might have followed that of Mr. George.

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THE same criticism applies to the Prime Minister's speech at Wolverhampton, delivered with a Tory and a great landlord in the chair. Mr. George spoke of the "comradeship" of the Coalition, which he has turned into a slave-gang; but his language was essentially that of progressive Conservatism. He was not afraid of the "vested interests," to whose keeping he will presently entrust the readjustment of electric power, but of "vested prejudices." In other words, Mr. George will do without the party system, and also without the safeguards of honesty and consistency which that system provides. He declares for land settlement, apparently on the Roman pattern, land reclamation, the development of electric power, and the rest of it. All the programmes, including Mr. Asquith's, fall on these lines, the difference being in method and agents. Thus Mr. George will presumably

put the development of our electric power in the hands of Mr. Merz; the Labor Party will submit it to public control and profit. He spoke arrogantly of a "Parliamentary conspiracy" to overthrow him on the Maurice debate, said that he wanted "none of that sort of business," and declined to accept candidates from the "caucus," i.e., from the representatives of their friends and neighbors. His claim is therefore for pure centralization in politics.

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THE clearest and most far-sounding electoral note has been struck by Labor. Its manifesto is a proclamation of a policy which will furnish the debates and decisions of the next ten years. The key-sentence is that which proclaims the design to "build a new world and build it by constitutional means." No one can doubt that a new world is wanted to replace that which its guides have drenched with blood; or that the old world, being built on force, should give way to one built in the main on reason. Labor makes the proper approach to reconstruction. It declares for a peace by "international co-operation," founded on a "league of free peoples," warns the Coalition to take its hands off the growing democracies of Europe, and to withdraw its forces from Russia, and demands the restoration of the International. It proclaims freedom for Ireland and India and for Britain also, to be reached through the "complete abolition of conscription," free citizenship, free speech, and a free Parliament. It claims the land for the workers, and the provision of a million new houses at fair rents. The people are to be made fit for their inheritance by universal, free, open, and continuous education.

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THE financial basis of the new democracy is quite sound. There is to be a levy on capital, and indirect taxation is to be opposed. "Labor is firm against tariffs and for free trade," and the guarantees against sweating are to be sought through an international code of industrial law. It is for land nationalization, and for the control of vital services, such as mines, transport, shipping, armaments, and electric power, with the minimum wage for their workers. It declares for the equality of sex, and opens its gates to women, whose true party is declared to be the party of Labor, and to the co-operators. This is more like a Charter than a programme, and it is a Charter that is wanted.

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THE material results of Mr. George's war on Liberalism are now apparent. The party has been completely disorganized. "Georgians" fight "Asquithians" and the latter are also assailed by Unionists, while they must meet the independent attack of Labor. It is clear that the Prime Minister has "budgetted" for a Tory House of Commons. Mr. George's and Mr. Law's "ticket of leave" is distributed to 280 Unionist Candidates and only 140 Liberals. In Greater London it is held by 61 Unionist and 15 Liberals. Even in Scotland, foster-mother of modern Liberalism, where

such a thing as a Tory majority is unknown, the Coalition Whips recommend 29 Tories and 28 "Liberals," though in the last Parliament the representation was divided between 54 Liberals and 15 Unionists. A similar measure has been dealt out to Liberal Bradford. The "Daily News" publishes a provisional list of 205 Liberals, duly chosen by their associations, against whom Pope George has issued his Bull, while a swarm of carpet-baggers are descending on their constituencies. No regard is paid to service, military or other, quality, experience, or fitness for the work of reconstruction. In many cases a private inquisition has been set up. Sir Godfrey Baring, for example, was called into a room in the House of Commons, and required to give a pledge of five years' service with the Coalition. In another case it is the Tory caucus which intervenes. Thus Mr. Falconer, in Forfarshire, was called on to disown and apologise for his vote in favor of an inquiry into the Maurice Letter on penalty of forfeiting the support of the local Unionists. There is only one answer to these tactics. Every pledge-bound man should be opposed by voice, pen, and vote.

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ACCORDING to an inspired press report, the extradition of the ex-Kaiser is being considered by the Mixed Governments, and the legal aspect of the question examined by the British law officers. The problem, which is real enough, is not one of law but of expediency. Possibly there is some crime for which the ex-Kaiser could be tried, and some court which could pronounce sentence upon him. But once legal or semi-legal machinery of this kind has been set in motion, the popular clamor that he should be hanged will become irresistible. No doubt the ex-Kaiser deserves to be hanged, if any man deserves to be. But what purpose would be served? Autocrats have been executed in the past; but their execution has not been a deterrent to their successors. To wreak vengeance on him in order to provide a popular spectacle is unworthy and unthinkable. And his execution would have more dangerous consequences. The foundation of a legend of a martyr-Emperor would have been laid, and who knows that he might not become a national hero? There would be something indescribably sordid in the thought that the Allied Governments should pander to the instincts of the mob. Let the Kaiser be permitted quietly to escape to the ends of the earth, not butchered to make a holiday.

\* \* \*

THE documents published by the new Bavarian Government concerning the origin of the war are so utterly damning that they will come as something of a surprise even to those who have been convinced of the responsibility of the Central Powers. They consist of extracts from the reports of the Bavarian Ambassador in Berlin to the then Bavarian Premier, Count Hertling. They show with brutal frankness that the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia was drafted with the deliberate object of making war inevitable. The only point of difference between the accomplices was the question how this end should be secured. The Ballplatz suggested that the ultimatum should be delayed until MM. Poincaré and Viviani had left St. Petersburg so that counter-measures would be difficult or impossible; the Wilhelmstrasse favored immediate action so that Serbia would have no time to offer any satisfaction. The Ballplatz carried the day. The Kaiser's absence in Norwegian waters was arranged in order that Germany might be able to declare that she was completely surprised by the turn of events. All these things were contained

in a report dated July 18th. Obviously the story of the Crown Council at Potsdam is true, though it would appear that the date generally given—July 5th—is too early. The precise motives of the Bavarian Government in publishing these damning documents at this moment are an interesting subject for speculation.

\* \* \*

THE sweeping victories of the Majority Socialists over the Independents in Bremen and Leipzig leave no doubt that so far as numbers are concerned the moderate elements in the German revolution have the upper hand. The victories were not gained over the Independents as such, but over that small section of them called the Spartacus group, which has always differed from the Independent leaders upon fundamental questions of policy. Therefore, these voting results should have the effect of further consolidating the German Socialist party. The Spartacus group, together with the personal supporters of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg, has already declared its intention of breaking away from the Independents; and it is devoutly to be hoped that they put their promise into practice. Then there will be no room for doubt that the Cabinet of six is solid in its rejection of government by the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils as a permanent institution. How far the danger of an armed *coup* by the Berlin Bolsheviks really exists still would be difficult to say. But it is now safe to assume that the possible repercussion of any such explosion in the provinces has been greatly diminished by the firm line taken by revolutionary governments in the Federal States. The meeting of Federal delegates showed that with the possible exception of Brunswick the states are unanimous in the demand for a National Assembly.

\* \* \*

To leave the possible danger from the extremists on one side, the main question now at issue is the date when the Constituent Assembly is to meet. On this question there are, obviously, differences within the Cabinet of Six itself. Barth, the most radical of the Independent Socialists in it, desires to postpone the meeting until some drastic Socialistic measures have been put through, and at the Federal Conference he made the demand that an assembly of Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils should be summoned to act as a preliminary Parliament. And it is reported (though it is rather difficult to believe) that Müller and Molkenbuhr, the heads of the Executive Council of the Berlin Soviet, are in favor of this programme. If this is really the case, the programme probably has more than one supporter in the Cabinet of Six, for both Molkenbuhr and Müller (the business manager of "Vorwärts") are Majority stalwarts, and it is extremely unlikely that they would be found in conflict with Ebert and Schiedemann. Meanwhile, one has the sense that the drama is being played with the principal actors absent. The demobilized soldiers now streaming home will decide its fifth act. Though any speculation concerning their behavior would be premature, the reports are fairly unanimous that the demobilization so far has been orderly beyond expectation.

\* \* \*

THE most important news from what was Austria-Hungary is the nomination of the Serbian Crown Prince as Regent of the whole South Slav State. This news was, typically enough, withheld from the world by the Italian military authorities, who prevented Agram from communicating with the West. Apparently the basis of the Crown Prince's nomination is his adherence to the agreement concluded in Geneva a few weeks ago between the Agram provisional government, the South Slav Com-

mittee, the Serbian parliamentary opposition and the Serbian Premier, by which a joint Serbian-South Slav delegation should be established in Paris, representing a future State in which there should be complete political and religious equality between the Serbians of the kingdom and the South Slavs of the old Empire. The Serbian premier, M. Pashitch, seems to have pursued a purely Serbian policy, and by thus delaying the establishment of an authoritative South-Slav-Serbian representative to have played into the hands of the Italian Imperialists, who have lost no time in establishing themselves in Croatia as well as Dalmatia. With the appointment of the Crown Prince the last Italian objection to recognition of the South Slavs by the Allies should be invalidated, and a term at last set to the encroachments of "sacred egoism" during the armistice.

\* \* \*

THE Allied intervention in Siberia pursues its inevitable course. On November 18th, Admiral Koltchak, the ex-commander of the Black Sea Fleet, dissolved the council of Ministers of the All-Russian Government at Omsk, and made himself Dictator. The two social revolutionary members of the Government of Five, MM. Avksentseff and Zenziroff, have been arrested. Their crime consists in having declared that the Omsk Government was becoming a reactionary body, and their punishment is a proof positive of the charge. They also refused to sanction the arrest of M. Tchernoff, the agrarian reformer of the Kerensky Government. Everywhere in Russia English policy has followed the same line, which leads direct to the forcible suppression of Anglophil and anti-Bolshevist revolutionaries by reactionaries, maintained in power by the money of the English taxpayer. There is no obscurity about Admiral Koltchak's position. He is a Tsarist *pur sang*, and his *coup d'état* was accomplished for him by a secret organization of royalist officers. For the moment we can only express the hope that the Labor Party is taking adequate note of what is being done with British approval and assistance in Siberia.

\* \* \*

THE controversy in America over the conception of the freedom of the seas which is to be maintained by the U.S.A. at the Peace Conference is apparently more vigorous than illuminating. Out of the debate two ominous facts emerge. One, the less important, is Mr. Roosevelt's venomous denunciation of President Wilson for his acceptance of "the German view" of the freedom of the seas on the ordinary Jingo grounds familiar in discussion here. The second is the enormous naval building programme announced by Mr. Daniels on behalf of the American Government. It would seem that Mr. Roosevelt would have made a far better case by pointing to the difficulty in the way of America requesting England to accept the principle of the freedom of the seas when confronted with the American naval programme. No doubt a great American Navy might be the instrument of the League of Nations; and it might be a powerful persuasive for those Englishmen of the Blue-water School who have not realized how great a burden the maintenance of the old omnipotent armada will be under the new conditions. But such arguments are better brought forward in a quiet way. The abruptness of the announcement may merely stiffen opposition. What is unhappily evident is the opposition to the President's policy, in America no less than in Europe. Mr. Wilson may have to come out and appeal to the scores of millions who accept his leadership against the Trusts and the Cabinets who reject it.

\* \* \*

THE Government's plans for military demobilization may be in the forward stage at which we are led to

suppose that they have arrived. That we have as yet no means of knowing, and we can only hope that the plans are ready and workable, and that they provide for complete discharge, and not merely for demobilization, which would admit of recall to the colors in case of industrial trouble. Of the position in respect of civil demobilization there can be no doubt. Either the plans are not ready or the Government is not intending to have any plans at all. Already discharges of women are proceeding at a rapid pace, and earnings are being drastically reduced. Lord Curzon's estimate of a million unemployed does not seem likely to be exaggerated; and the consequences of discharges on such a scale in the excited state of Labor feeling are likely to be very grave indeed. There seems to have been little provision for the rapid turnover from war to peace production, and none at all for the redemption of the pledges given to the trade unions. The provision for unemployment allowances is freely criticised as inadequate, and in any case lasts only for thirteen weeks. What will happen when the thirteen weeks are over no one can say. It will take the Government over the General Election, and perhaps that is all they have imagination to care about at the present stage. They are playing with bigger forces than they know; and their policy of allowing themselves to be immobilized by every sinister interest is no way of meeting them.

\* \* \*

SIGNS are not wanting that Labor disturbances on a large scale may be looked for in the near future unless the industrial problem is courageously handled on democratic lines. The National Union of Railwaymen was one of the first trade unions to conclude an industrial truce at the beginning of the war; and it is the first definitely to terminate the truce now that hostilities are over. The railwaymen are putting forward a national programme of a far-reaching character. Not only do they demand the retention of all war advances, but also a further advance of 10s. calculated on pre-war prices. The most interesting demand contained in the programme is for equal representation of the railwaymen upon the management bodies of all railways. At the same time comes the news that the miners in the English coalfields are putting forward drastic proposals for advances in wage-rates and for the entire reconstitution of the machinery of negotiation in the industry. Moreover, the Triple Alliance of miners, railwaymen, and transport workers has been called together for the presentation of joint demands. Faced by such a situation, which is only typical of what is happening in other industries also, only a Government of madmen would go to the country with a programme that is certain to antagonize Labor, and, even if they are successful at the polls, only the more certain to stimulate industrial trouble.

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WE see that Mr. Churchill still calls himself a member of the Liberal Party, though he is directly a party to Mr. George's conspiracy to destroy it. But it is clear that he will be no helper in the work of reconstituting society on the lines of peace, retrenchment, and reform. He insists that, League or no League of Nations, the "supremacy" of the British fleet must remain. Supremacy against whom? Against America? Unless we are to reckon Japan, no other great Naval Power exists, and in such circumstances the maintenance in peace of a British Armada of overwhelming strength would be a challenge to re-open the war of armaments. America will not accept such a position, and speeches like Mr. Churchill's are an invitation to her to contest it. Such thinking is a crime against humanity. The establishment of a League of Nations carries with it the subordination of national to international levies, whether by land or by sea. The national forces become police forces. Naturally a British Navy would play its proper part in such an arrangement. But its function would be essentially a trust. And a trust is a delegated duty, not one that the trustee can take on himself and interpret according to his pleasure.

## Politics and Affairs.

### THE PART OF LABOR.

A GREAT party, which has governed the country for generations, has been all but destroyed in a week. An adventurer has captured about half of its Parliamentary representatives. He has imposed on scores of its candidates a formula, concerted with its opponents, which annuls two of its governing principles. As a superfluous insult, he has bound these men to an unquestioning support of himself in a Parliament whose anti-Liberal character he had ensured in advance. Dozens of Liberal Associations have accepted the capitulation of their members, and signed their own spiritual death-warrants. No Liberal tradition has been spared while this moral felony on freedom was being accomplished. Great electoral districts, like Scotland, London, Bradford, and Yorkshire, have been handed over, by consent or by no consent, to Tory domination. Mr. George affects the super-man, and the "caucus" is replaced by the super-caucus. Even the Parliament which he is packing with his nominees is not to be a Parliament in any sense which the Constitution acknowledges or the free spirit of a people accepts. Only in form will it be a true organ of legislation. The shaping power will be with the interests which deal more and more directly with the Administration, and in future laws will pass as quickly as possible out of the sight of the House of Commons. This body will be unfree from the hour of its birth, and its members can recover their liberty only by dishonoring their pledge to their master. All this Liberals have accepted with their eyes open. They know that though Mr. George's double part has been to speak as a Tory to Tories and a Liberal to Liberals, his actual bargain was made, not with them or their leader, but with Toryism, and that when he addressed them as a Radical, a Free Trader, and a Home Ruler he had tied himself to Protection and Coercion, and had arranged to govern the next Parliament through a majority of Tories. What he ordered Sir George Younger and Captain Guest have duly executed. Electoral Britain has been mapped out as if it were a Baltic province under a Ludendorff; and half the Liberal Party, consenting to its own death, has handed its betrayer the fortress of Parliament and the key to its spiritual power.

The situation thus created calls for decisive handling. Not all the Liberal Party has bowed the knee to Baal. Men of conscience and devotion remain, and we think it a calamity that they should be assailed in their seats\* not only by Mr. George's camarilla, but by the party which claims the Liberal inheritance. Mr. George's Prussianism will be destroyed not by mechanical force so much as by the revolt of free minds. Intelligence, which detects the shallowness of Mr. George's demagogic appeal, character, which resents its lure, and vision, which perceives the not distant peril of a disorganization of the social structure, are natural allies in a fight against dictatorship. The leaders of the Labor Party should not despise them. We are convinced that no middle-class Government can in itself deal with industrial Britain. But the progressive instinct is strong in this country; it continually produces new types of statesmanship; and even though the Labor Party returned two hundred

members to the new Parliament, it could not work without a strong leaven of middle-class brains and experience. Its ideal tactics would have been to form a democratic block, united on a minimum programme, and exchanging votes in constituencies where a Labor man or a Radical faces a Georgian Coalitionist of the Liberal or the Tory complexion. Failing such an arrangement, it would be common-sense for both parties to withdraw a weaker candidate whose only function is to destroy a stronger one. Mr. George has withheld from the constituencies the elements of a fair and true election. He has disfranchised a good part of their male youth. He has made it impossible for the nation to say what is its choice among the many varieties of political creed presented to it.

It is therefore for Labor to do what it can to straighten the tangle. It has the promise of the future. But its task is arduous: and in the great movement towards industrial and political democracy, the political advance is for the moment the more important. A numerically weak Labor Party in the next Parliament would be a national calamity. An unaided one would be unequal to its job. The Labor leaders cannot, in an hour of confusion, provide a scientific check on minority rule. Only Proportional Representation or the Alternative Vote could do that. But they cannot forget that theirs will be the main responsibility for representative government, and in the last resort for social order. It is their function to find a home for the best thought of the best minds, or to welcome their free co-operation. The new Parliament will be a motley show. Wealth that seeks power, or more wealth, or the vulgar crown of wealth, the weak man\* and the bought one, will all be of the party of Mr. George. For the first time in her history the true representative idea will have been deliberately discarded in favor of the idea of delegation; and the right of free judgment, which is only another word for the loyalty of the soul to itself, completely given away.

In this Parliament, the Labor Party will in effect be the Opposition, for Mr. Asquith does not propose such a part for himself or his followers. Thus, by the deliberate will or consent of the Tory leaders and the reluctant assent of the Liberal chief, our politics assume the color they have already taken in Central Europe. The capital error is that of the Tory Party. They drove their bargain with Mr. George on a basis which assigned 280 seats to their partisans and 140 to Mr. George's ticket-of-leave men, and thus gave them, in the haste and confusion of the electoral appeal, a certain and overwhelming majority in the new Parliament. Thus they hoped to run the after-war Empire, while Mr. George acted as pain-killer to British democracy. They would have done better to study the progress of thought in the mind of the flower of the workmen and of their favorite thinkers. They would then have seen it poised between the idea of representation and that of "direct action." Obviously the right course would have been to reinforce the first movement and discourage the second. They preferred to destroy the Liberal Party, to cheat Labor out of its fair proportion of members, and to crush out independent criticism. Scores of constituencies will be represented by men who have been forced down their throats. Many of these misrepresentatives will speak for a small fraction of the electors. Many will be mere messengers from Mr. George's under-world.

The Parliament thus chosen will have no

\* Notably in the Don Valley and Penistone division of Yorkshire, in York, and in some Labor constituencies. Equally unpardonable is the Liberal assault on Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Anderson.

"The slave-Soul," as the Greeks called him.

power. The world will be re-plotted without its knowledge, for Mr. George's diplomacy, like Mr. George's election, is a thing of secret bargains, of receipts given for goods exchanged between the unknown dealers in them. The subjects of these transactions will be the peoples who won the war and who lost it. All will suffer; none will know who make them suffer. For these evils there is only one remedy. A new force in politics must be generated with the help of men who prefer the service of the people to that of the society of power. Our tragic comedian, intent on "making" his election, might with some now inconceivable enrichment of his mind and character, have played his part in making a better world. The vision exists, science and goodwill give the means of realizing it; we have only to unite the Christian idea with the Socialist criticism of industrial society in order to produce that reconciliation of social thought and practice which will at last make life worth living. Mr. George has barred himself out from the work of reconstruction. The effort of Labor will be to prevent him muddling or destroying it.

#### IMPERIAL PREFERENCE AND WORLD PEACE.

THE causes of war, in recent years, have been reducible to two main heads—the discontent of oppressed nationalities and economic rivalry. Of these it should be possible, at the peace settlement, to eliminate the first by the constitution of new national states, with guarantees of the rights of minorities. And there is general agreement that this must be the aim. It has even been put forward as the principal aim of the Allied nations. With regard to economic rivalry, there is much less agreement, much less preparation of public opinion, and much more powerful forces enlisted unrepentantly on the side of the conditions that make for war. It is not yet understood that the possession of dependencies is coveted by modern states mainly for the sake of economic exploitation; and that, so long as the "ownership" of territory is regarded as a means to commercial monopoly, the contest for such ownership must proceed between states, and must issue, sooner or later, in war. The economic and the military policies of states are intimately connected.

President Wilson, in his charter of world peace, has seen and provided for this issue. His third point runs as follows:—

*"The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers, and the establishment of equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the Peace and associating themselves for its maintenance."*

What is implied here? The President, under the exigencies of an election campaign, has explained that he does not mean complete Free Trade among the members of the League. Perhaps he would like to mean that. But America is a land of High Protection, and a sudden revolution in its fiscal system is not practical politics. So far, then, as tariffs are concerned, the principle is to be "no differential duties among members of the League," that is, whatever tariffs are imposed or maintained, are to apply equally to all. The "most favored nation" clause becomes universal; which is the same as to say that it ceases to exist.

But this question of tariffs is only part, and a comparatively small part, of the real issue. The real contest

between modern States is for the raw materials and the markets of those economically undeveloped regions, which are either dependencies of the great States or have a nominal independence under weak governments subject to diplomatic, economic, and military pressure. Africa and China are the outstanding examples. What international rules are to be applied and observed in such regions?

Presumably, the President has in his mind the all-round application of what is known as the "open door." But the "open door" is concerned with much more than tariffs. What it implies is embodied in a number of treaties. The public hardly realizes the extent and importance of the territories that are or have been subjected by agreement to this *régime*. They include Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Abyssinia, the Congo, Liberia, Zanzibar, China, Siam, and the Samoan, Tonga, and Caroline Islands. And the Open Door, as defined in treaties, involves equal treatment for all nations in respect not only of tariffs, but of shipping, navigation on rivers and canals, railway rates, and the granting of concessions and contracts for public works. Such a *régime*, fully and fairly applied in all the dependencies and "non-adult" countries of the world, would make the question of territorial sovereignty a matter of indifference so far as the commercial interests of nations are concerned. To take a concrete example—it does not really matter to Germany, from an economic point of view, whether or no she "owns" African dependencies, so long as she has fair and free commercial access to them. But cut her off from that, and the "ownership" might become a matter of such paramount and vital importance as would lead to a new war. The trouble about these Open-door agreements has been that they have not been properly observed. The outstanding example is the Congo. But there are many others. For instance, in Nigeria, the British Niger Company managed, in effect, during its period of control, to establish a monopoly for its trade which led to serious friction between ourselves and France. We may be pretty sure that, unless this matter is taken up by the League, unless the "Open-door" is made part of its covenants, and the international commission appointed to watch over the observance of the rules, and to call offenders to book, economic competition in these great regions of the world will become once more the cause of political friction which may engender new wars.

How does all this bear upon British policy? That is a point that has been too little considered; and yet none is more vital to the future peace of the world. We are told that we must revise our old ideas in the light of recent events, and abandon the "shibboleths" of the past. And that is good counsel, so far as shibboleths have really misled us. But the most important revision we need, in our outlook on commercial policy, is a realization of its effect on the peace of the world. All questions of domestic wealth or prosperity hardly weigh in the balance in comparison; since, while the menace of war continues, all prosperity anywhere is illusory. It would be better to be a poor nation, secure of peace, than a rich nation preparing for war.

Now, we know that the present Prime Minister and his followers have accepted the policy of "imperial preference." The desirability of this policy, from a narrowly British or imperial point of view, will not here be considered. We are concerned with its bearing on the League of Nations. Is Imperial Preference in harmony with President Wilson's third point, and with his great purpose of world peace? Formally, it might be said to be so. For the President has explained that he would leave to all states the determination of their fiscal policy, providing only that there be no hostile discrimination. Hence the argument:—"The British Empire is a state, as the American Union is a state. As they may put a tariff round their territory, so we round ours." But consider what the British Empire is. It comprises a quarter of the surface of the globe. It comprises every sort of soil, climate, product. Of some important raw materials it has almost a monopoly. No nation in the whole history of the world ever held an economic position so commanding. We talk about the ambitions

of other states to achieve world-domination. It never seems to occur to us that we ourselves come nearer to possessing it than any Empire of the past has ever done. Hitherto, what has made this position of ours tolerable to the rest of the world has been our adherence, on the whole, to the policy of equal opportunity. We have not tried to make the Empire a closed preserve for citizens of the Empire. Are we going now to embark on that policy, or are we not? That is the real question, one of world-wide import, concealed behind the phrase "imperial preference." We are invited by Mr. Lloyd George to follow him blindfold, on this as on so many other matters. For we do not know what are to be the purposes, implications, and developments of the new policy. Perhaps he does not know himself. Perhaps it has not occurred to him that the whole future of civilization may depend on this concession he has made to British Protectionists. Some things already done by the Coalition Government suggest a very sinister prospect. We may refer, in particular, to the measure, introduced by Mr. Bonar Law, that monopolizes for citizens of the Empire the whole output of palm-kernels in West Africa. Is it in that direction that the Coalition Government proposes to develop British commerce? If it be, our adherence to a League of Nations will be of little enough value. We shall be ruining by our economic policy the peace we profess to be establishing by the League.

This warning cannot be sounded too soon or too earnestly. Most true it is that we must do new thinking with free minds. But this applies to tariff reformers and imperialists at least as much as to free traders and pacifists. The new thinking on this point is that economic nationalism is as much opposed as militarist nationalism to the peace of the world and the good future of civilization. The two aspects of nationalism do, in fact, go together; and by a sound instinct a Militarist is practically always a Protectionist. For the root idea is the same in both cases, the idea of the independent State, free from obligations, legal or moral, to other States, bent only on its own aggrandizement, and therefore always ready to make war. It is self-contradictory to adhere to a policy of world-peace, and also to one of nationalist protection. And especially is it self-contradictory for the British, who control so vast a territory and so huge a population. Here and now we have to make our choice. Is the Empire to be a trust for civilization or a prize for some sixty million white men to exploit? Are we, who profess ourselves the champions of liberty against world-domination, to constitute an economic domination of the world? The choice, we may say in Goethe's words, is "brief and yet endless." Yet it may be doubted whether more than a handful of men in this country are aware that it is before us.

#### THE LESSON OF THE ALBERT HALL.

THE comedy played last week at the Royal Albert Hall was more than an isolated triumph for Labor and free speech: it was a portent. No act could have better brought home to the mind and imagination of the people the essential power of Labor, and at the same time its potency for good or evil. The directors of the Royal Albert Hall, or those who instigated them to exclude Labor from the only hall in London which is available for a big demonstration, richly deserved their fate, and no sympathy need be wasted upon them. They gave Labor a magnificent opportunity for a demonstration in force, and put into its hands a far finer piece of election propaganda than any party could have devised for itself. The events at the Albert Hall were essentially comedy and not farce, for behind them lay forces which have in them the making of tragedy as well as the promise of a happy ending.

Consider what would have happened if the Trustees had persisted in their refusal with the tacit acquiescence of the Government. On Wednesday was the Victory Ball at the Albert Hall—a gathering of the clans of London wealth and society. There would have been no taxi-cabs and no 'buses. No Tube trains would have

stopped at South Kensington. Any attempt to restore the electric current would have plunged all Kensington into darkness. It would have been a powerful demonstration; but it would have been far more than that. It would have been a foretaste of the possibilities that are lying ahead—and that no wise man would invite.

Only a madman can fail to see to-day that great changes in the social order are essential. Essential in themselves and for their own sake; but essential also, to put it on the meanest level, to preserve the country from the emergence of anarchic forces. Everywhere there are signs of a Labor unrest beyond all precedent. Lord Curzon speaks of "a million unemployed." The temper of these unemployed workers must rise if they find that no real preparation has been made for industrial demobilization and no adequate provision for their maintenance while they are out of work. In Woolwich Arsenal and in all the great munition centres, disquiet already prevails. Nor is the unrest more immediate among munition workers than elsewhere. The railwaymen have lost no time in terminating the industrial truce, and are putting forward a drastic programme of immediate demands; while the miners in both the English and the Welsh coalfields have also entered the field already with far-reaching proposals. With these are the transport workers; and the machinery of the great Triple Industrial Alliance, created during the war and never yet brought into action, is already being set in motion. On every hand there is evidence of a speedy renewal of industrial hostilities on a scale hitherto unknown. Some respite may be secured by the maintenance of wage rates at the war level in most cases under the new Wages Act. Upon this, however, it would be unwise to count too heavily. The Act does not guarantee war-time rates; and, in any case, there are demands to be met which have no concern with wages. The Government has failed to satisfy the Trade Unions with its proposals for the restoration of Trade Union conditions, and the continuance of dilution is already giving rise to trouble. This and still more the more conscious and purposeful demand of Labor for a real measure of industrial control are likely to make for the conversion of unrest into open conflict.

If it is once agreed that large changes are immediately necessary in the social system, the remedy is clear. The force most capable of preventing disorder, and bringing the required changes to pass by constitutional means, is Labor itself. The best chance of avoiding anarchic industrial disturbances is to place adequate power and responsibility in its hands. At present, the indications point to a great electoral movement towards Labor. But the greatest possible landslide cannot place it in power in the next Parliament. If all its candidates were returned, there are barely enough to form a majority without the Irish, who may be conspicuous by their absence. But the chances are that the next Parliament will be itself a stop-gap. Indeed, in the public interest it must be made so, and the best way of securing this will be by the return of a strong Labor Party, supported by all that is best and most steadfast in what remains of the Liberal forces. Such a party is essential to prepare the way for the real Parliament of Reconstruction. It is still more essential to prevent the emergence of anarchy before Reconstruction can be even begun. If Labor cannot make its voice effectively heard in the new Parliament, that will not prevent it from making its voice heard by other means. It will merely substitute the strike for the vote, and divert into industrial action the forces thwarted in their attempt to employ political methods. It will lead to the re-enactment on a national scale and for the grand style of tragic drama, of the little comedy of the Albert Hall. Just as the action of the Trustees substituted for a peaceful meeting a strike of electricians to be followed by a much bigger meeting, so the exclusion of Labor from political power may lead to national strikes followed either by revolutionary action or by the return of Labor to Parliament in a more revolutionary frame of mind.

It is to the interest of Society—how much to its

interest we hardly yet realise—that the big social readjustments which are inevitable should be brought about by peaceful means. Mr. Lloyd George, who is now undergoing Field Punishment Number One on the Tory gun-carriage, could not bring about these changes even if he had the desire to do so. The forces of progress and democracy may not find in Labor or in the Labor Party all that they want; but they are bound to share the task of moulding its future. Politically as well as industrially, Labor is still essentially plastic: it has not yet hardened or become rigid after its four years in the furnace of war. It has national and international ideals which leave room for the self-expression within it of every truly democratic force, and the next few years will be for it a period of crystallisation into a definite form. Henceforth there is always an expanding chance to form the democracy of the future by broadening Labor's idealism and spiritualising the economic forces on which it depends. But there is always the risk of the diversion of the constitutional Labor Movement into anarchy. There are those who argue that a far better world than the old world would at last arise. But men and women have had enough of force. The case for a strong Labor party is that only Labor can control Labor. And the case for democracy is that the final ordering of the world must be done by those who do its work of hand and brain.

#### DEAD OR ALIVE ?

We have been told many times officially that the Secret Treaties are dead. Mr. Balfour has told the House of Commons that the Poincaré-Doumergue agreement with Russia was concluded without the approval of Great Britain and that it is no longer binding on the belligerents. The Governments of the Entente have pledged themselves to accept all President Wilson's points save one, which has nothing to do with territorial acquisitions. In so far as professions are concerned the position is clear enough. Now for a few facts.

In so far as the secret treaties tended to the aggrandizement of Russia they have been made null and void by events a year ago. Whatever Russia may have done in other respects she has purged herself of her share in this iniquity. Of the other beneficiaries there remain Italy and France. France was to have the left bank of the Rhine, and permission to create a buffer State, if possible, on the right bank. Italy was to receive large portions of purely Slav territory, comprising a great part of Dalmatia. The principal architect of the former agreement was M. Poincaré; of the latter Signor Sonnino. Both these gentlemen are still in office, and neither of them has to the public knowledge found occasion to declare that the agreements were no longer in force. In the late summer of this very year there was a heated controversy in the Italian press in which Signor Sonnino was called upon to renounce these Italian claims. He made no response, and owing to his reluctance the South Slav government is unrecognised to this day.

Thus there is an *a priori* case, if not for actual suspicion, at least for unremitting attention to the activities of our continental politics during the armistice period. Precisely at this critical moment the attention of the country is diverted to a foolhardy general election. Since this is so, it is no time to conceal our apprehensions in the formulæ of polite inquiry, or to allow ourselves to be lulled by the assurance that what is being done under the Armistice is a matter of no account, because it will be completely superseded by the Treaty of Peace. The creation of accomplished facts is a fine art in European politics, and the difficulty of undoing them, once they are created, a commonplace of European history.

To take the simpler and more obvious case first, there can hardly be any doubt that Italy is busily engaged in creating an "accomplished fact" in the Eastern and North-Eastern Adriatic. By a strange coincidence, under the armistice with Austria-Hungary the Allies chose to occupy practically the whole province of Dal-

matia. There was no obvious reason for the occupation. No military danger threatened us from Dalmatia. The South Slavs were on our side. They had taken possession of the Austro-Hungarian fleet and had declared their anxiety to surrender it to the U.S.A., as representing the Allies as a whole. There was absolutely no naval danger. Nor were there any internal reasons for the occupation. The South Slavs had expelled the Magyar troops from their territory, and had in being an army of their own sufficient to maintain order. Nevertheless, the hinterland of Dalmatia was occupied, and the zone of occupation corresponded with that portion of South Slav territory which was assigned to Italy under the secret treaties. The immediate result of this was to be foreseen. The South Slavs have come to the conclusion that the Secret Treaties do, in fact, stand. They have resisted the Italian occupation by force of arms and a series of conflicts (concerning which our Press has been silent) have taken place. On their side the Italians have pleaded this armed resistance as a means for occupying further territory. The Serbian troops have been compelled by a decision of Entente representatives to abandon Fiume to the Italians, and the final result is that under the armistice every port of the South Slav State has passed into Italian hands.

The case concerning the left bank of the Rhine and the buffer State on the right bank is slightly more complicated. "Vorwärts" has reported that on Saturday last negotiations took place at Strassburg between Marshal Foch and certain German representatives concerning the foundation of a Republic, including South Germany and the Rhine provinces. We are loth to believe this to be true. No authority can have been given to the Allied Commander-in-Chief to negotiate upon matters of vital political importance. But we are concerned to observe that the territories of the proposed Republic seem closely to coincide with those of the proposed buffer State of the Secret Treaties. We ask, then, with whom can Marshal Foch have been "negotiating"? At present Bavaria is a Socialist republic. It has been formally proclaimed as such, and the Wittelsbach has signed an authentic document of abdication. It is impossible to suppose that Eisner, the provisional President of the provisional republic, has been a party to the negotiations. The South German Socialists have repeatedly declared that they want no separation from the German Republic. Certainly they do not want to be dominated by a Bolshevik Prussia any more than they wanted to be dominated by an autocratic Prussia. But that is another matter. They wish to remain in the German Republic. What may be happening is that the clericals of Bavaria and the Rhine provinces are exploiting the danger of Bolshevism in Berlin for their own purpose. A separate State—we do not believe it would be a Republic for long—would enable them once more to secure the preponderance of power. They could make themselves momentarily popular by representing that they got more favorable terms from the conqueror. Is France offering such terms? We cannot think that her Government can have lent itself to such a transaction.

We leave on one side the question of Alsace-Lorraine. The crape has been removed from the statues on the Place de la Concorde, and, presumably, the question is a question no more. Is there no question of the left bank of the Rhine either? We learn from the French Minister of Armaments that there is to be a discussion between French and German delegates of the conditions on which economic relations between France and Germany may be resumed. The basis of these discussions, we are told by M. Loucheur, will be: "What does the right bank of the Rhine offer us in return for what the left bank will consent to concede?" If that is really to be the foundation on which the economic relations of France and Germany are to be laid before the peace, the accomplished fact of military occupation will have its counterpart in an accomplished economic settlement.

We submit that the evidence here set forth is sufficient to justify the suspicion, or at least the fear, that the Secret Treaties may not be dead after all. But

that is an urgent question. Is President Wilson's peace programme to be set at nought? Is a just settlement of Europe to be made impossible? It is no use saying that the principle of self-determination will be applied. The principle of self-determination can be gerrymandered as easily as any election, above all under a military occupation. The way in which self-determination was applied to the Baltic Provinces when the Germans were in military possession of them is fresh in our memory. And even if direct political pressure under the military régime seems inconceivable, there remains the method of offering special financial inducements. The remission of an indemnity here, the enticing prospect of an exclusive commercial agreement there, can work wonders in the way of creating an apparently legal justification for territorial annexations. We shall be told that it is an unworthy thing to doubt the good faith of our Allies, and that it is also inexpedient and inopportune. We are reluctant to doubt. But the doubt can be removed. It is worthy, expedient, and opportune that it should be removed now. That can be done by a clear unambiguous declaration that the Secret Treaties are really cancelled by the free will of their authors. It should be given now, without delay, for the signs of life that they have begun to show are disquieting to honest men.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

I HAVE known no political movement so swift and vehement as the reaction against Mr. George and his election. Give it time, and it would sweep him from power. Mr. Chamberlain's secession in 1886 was resented, and the Irish added fuel to the fire that burned in that inflammable heart and in the hottest of his opponents. But Mr. Chamberlain, always a straightforward man, conducted his schism openly and honestly. He was never a Home Ruler, and never a Gladstonian. All that he did was to refuse to move on to a new conception of politics, and to follow a leader he did not like, and who always abstained from courting him. He fought bitterly. But to the end of his career he remained untainted with a scandal like Mr. George's secret deal with the Tory Whips, and his ensuing deception of the Parliamentary Liberals. The betrayal gets worse as more of it is revealed. Not only constituencies but whole towns, with a Liberal tradition of generations, have been handed over to the enemy, much as Italian cities were trafficked about between the adventurers of the Renaissance. Decent men feel that apart from the political issues, tyrannous unscrupulousness must not be allowed its triumph.

It is this feeling which will destroy Mr. George. He has gone too far. His work may have been clumsily done; and Captain Guest has certainly wanted tact. But it is easy to blame agents, and kings are apt to disown unpleasant "acts of State." Captain Guest did what he was obviously ordered to do when Mr. George discovered that he could not attach much more than half of the Liberal Party. It was then necessary to base his future Government on the Tories, and their terms had to be his terms. He seems to have conceded them at once, for they could hardly have asked for more than Protection and an Irish policy which postpones Home Rule to the Greek Kalends. His agricultural policy is nothing. Landlords will sell at a price; and 300 Tories will be at hand in the House of Commons, and 300 more

in the House of Lords, to see that the compensation terms are good thumping ones.

BUT, essentially, Mr. George's power is gone. He has debauched one Parliament; but there will be enough Labor men and independent Radicals to see that he does not debauch another. The trouble is that unless 150 Labor men and 100 Radicals are elected, a powerful and responsible Opposition cannot be built up, and then the real power will lie outside the House of Commons. Mr. George indeed will try and govern without Parliament by his accustomed method of deals with the great organizations of Capital and Labor. But he will summon one of these spirits in vain. Labor has done with him, and without the co-operation of Labor, the government of England will be impossible. Mr. Asquith is a Moderate, and therefore could never be a hero or a close confidant of the workmen. But they trusted him more than they trust Mr. George, and to every bargain with the Prime Minister 50 per cent. or so will be added for want of confidence. To no party, therefore, can he deliver the goods. He dare not satisfy the Right; he cannot satisfy the Left. He will try a fresh combination: he will be repelled. His Parliament will be his simply because, like Scapin, he has deceived everybody in turn. If politics were pure comedy, he might, like Scapin, escape without a drubbing. But they contain elements of strife and fury, and if the new Parliament will be full of anger and the sense of deception, the country will be fuller still. The Government will be out of touch with the sources of economic trouble. It will lack the power of moral restraint. And it will find the centre of its weakness not in this or that bureaucrat, but in the personality of Mr. George.

ESTIMATES of the election are still very vague. The Coalition is a declining stock, and the Prime Minister takes much the same place in the workmen's fancy as Castlereagh did with the Radicals and rebels of a hundred years ago. His programme is laughed at as music-hall "patter," which the Socialist criticism (much more acute and much more widespread among the workmen than the middle-class politician imagines) ruthlessly analyzes. It would have had a rather better reception but for his associates. But birds are known by the feathers they wear, and the plumage of Mr. George's Dukes is rather too bright for workmen's eyes. With the middle-classes he stands better. But his raid on the constituencies has shocked thousands who took him for a Liberal and a democrat still, and the final reaction will be profound. But it may not be immediate. Division between Labor and Liberalism will shear the Opposition of half of its real strength, and the anger will be deep when the country finds that a "Minority Government" is in power. What will be the strength of the opposing force? Labor, which will be its pith and core, is growing more and more confident. A week ago its leaders counted on no more than 50 candidates. As I write the estimates vary from 80 to 100 and more. The free Liberals, who are the only Liberals left, reckon on rather more than 100. Mr. George's house-carles may be helped by their Tory friends to 100 more seats. In the absence of Sinn Fein this yields a predominantly Tory House of Commons. The Irish factor is uncertain. The Sinn Fein headquarters are periodically raided, the third Sinn Fein director of elections and most of its high

officials have been arrested and lodged in gaol (of course, without a charge), and in one case a voters' register has been seized, so that every means has been taken to secure a constitutional vote. In spite of these precautions, or because of them, Sinn Fein expects to win all but six seats (one in Belfast, Down, South Armagh, Donegal, Monaghan, and Tipperary), with two or three doubtfuls. Parliamentary Nationalism entirely disputes this estimate, and hopes for twenty-five. In any case, I conclude the Government will attain office not only without power, but with power, grimly formidable, arrayed against them.

MR. GEORGE cannot afford to lose strength, but he loses it. Two of the best of his colleagues are gone. Mr. Clynes is not a great organizer, but he has a thoroughly good mind, a pleasant character which kept his relationship with his party sweet during months of office, a remarkable, and even a distinguished, gift of speech. Lord Robert Cecil is a larger proposition altogether. If Toryism remains, I can imagine no other leader of it. Hotness of speech and temper sometimes obscures the breadth and range of his powers, and I suppose that as he clings to such a derelict as the Welsh Church, he must, like his more brilliant brother, have old-fashioned corners to his mind, which he is loth to sweep out. But he is of fine quality, neither too cynical nor too unprogressive to understand and interpret the greater issues of his time. It is tragic that his idle, sceptical cousin, *vieux jeu* to the tips of his fingers, should be in charge of the Foreign Office, when Lord Robert might have given it the service of his good workmanship and honest purpose. Let us hope that the Revolution will not sweep him away or race past him. The country should have a use for him.

So the Kaiser is to be hanged. So was Jefferson Davis. Davis was not as great an offender as the Kaiser. But he was of the same class. His adversary was one Abraham Lincoln, who happened to be a statesman, and therefore did not want to hang Davis. When he was urged to do it, he was wont to tell the following story:—

"When I was a boy in Indiana I went to a neighbour's house one morning and found a boy of my own size holding a coon by a string. I asked him what he had, and what he was doing. He said: 'It's a coon. Dad cotched six last night, and killed all but this poor little cuss. Dad told me to hold him until he came back, and I'm afraid he's going to kill this one too! and oh, Abe, I do wish he would get away!' 'Well, why don't you let him loose?' 'That wouldn't be right! and if I let him go, Dad would give me hell. But if he would go away himself, it would be all right.' Now, if Jeff Davis and those other fellows will only get away, it will be all right. But if we should catch them, and I should let them go, 'Dad would give me hell.'"

I leave the application to my readers—and the new German Government.

I AM glad to see even the House of Lords moved to protest against the retention of the censorship on foreign news. But does the country realize what is being done? There is now, as the "Manchester Guardian" points out, no enemy propaganda to stop which can lead, even remotely, to failure or miscarriage in a war that is over and done with. The only point on which discussion is going on abroad is a debate on peace. *And this the Government is trying to stop in this country.* The Press is being appealed to, in the name of the Prime Minister, to avoid all speculation in or discussion of the terms of peace. These terms are being canvassed with the utmost freedom in the French and Italian newspapers. A wide

French, a still more ambitious Italian, policy is being staked out in the Press, and is even materialising in military movements and occupations, while President Wilson's fourteen points are flouted altogether or criticised in detail. But there must be no British debate. Our newspapers, which always write with reserve on foreign affairs, are to be muzzled. This is the latest ukase of the Press Bureau. A peace of democracy is to be attained by the complete exclusion of the people from every kind of knowledge of the facts and issues, save in the form which the Government approves. I propose to disregard this order or recommendation. Does any journalist of conscience propose to obey it?

THERE is room to think that the War Office contemplates a deliberate process of demobilization, in the hope of keeping a large army—say a million men—in "reserve." This process, taken in connection with Mr. George's reserves on the subject of conscription, should be closely watched.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### THE PROBLEM OF THE INTELLIGENTSIA.—I.

THERE is one thing which will never be forgiven Mr. Lloyd George. We had hoped, often desperately, against hope, that our instinctive distrust of him was in essence mistaken, and that it was born of the knowledge that his ways are not as our ways. At times we thought that perhaps the truth might really be that he was governed by one sole belief, that a complete and crushing military victory over Germany was necessary to the salvation of the world, and that to this supreme end all means were lawful. In our moments of optimism we have imagined that, this end once achieved, he would by some generous gesture or utterance reveal that it was not for his own glory or the satisfaction of a thirst for personal power that he deliberately gathered all the authority of this country into his own hands, and threw the English constitution on to the refuse heap to be torn, like so much offal, by the pariah Press. He had it in his power to regain for England all her lost liberties, and more. One speech rededicating our sacrifices to the great cause for which they were made, one appeal to the victorious nation to be mindful of its high calling, one word of rebuke to the jackal-howl for vengeance, would have been enough. England will always respond to a noble summons. She would have responded, had the summons been made. Mr. Lloyd George alone could have made it.

Instead of this, he makes an election. The peculiar iniquity of the election does not here concern us. We are concerned with the moral effect of this incredibly sordid *dénouement* upon minds which have been tense with apprehension and expectation since the war began. There are many who have maintained their sanity against the horror of the incessant carnage solely by the thought that for a supreme ideal the price to be paid must needs be supreme. These were, for the most part, men who in the days before the war were not accustomed to think or act politically. By the standards of Solon perhaps they were not good citizens; they gratefully breathed the air of liberty and in return gave not a vote, but the best work of which they were capable. They lived in the clouds and, half-consciously, showed by their lives that they considered the theoretic life the best of all. Suddenly, they learned that the freedom which was their vital air, the sense of unlimited if unused possibilities of thought and act, was menaced. The ordered peace of the world was in danger of disaster.

From the moment of that alarm until now the members of this *intelligentsia*—we use the term for lack of a better—have been the most passionately determined citizens of all. They have seemed in their determination

to be divided against themselves. To the total both of the volunteers in the first week of the war and of the conscientious objectors to military service, they gave numbers out of all proportion to their quota. Indeed, it may roughly be said that those of them who were of military age were either volunteers or conscientious objectors. The proportion of conscripts among them was incredibly small. This was symbolic of the unity which underlay their ostensible division. They fought for freedom within and without the realm; they could not conceive that freedom could be otherwise than freely won.

But the great majority of them were volunteers in the national cause. To formulate within one's mind a conscientious objection to war demands an application of thought to political contingencies which few of them had given. War was a possibility so remote that it lay below their horizon; they had had no occasion to consider their attitude towards it. Thus it was easy for them to look upon the war when it came as the war to end wars. It was necessary that this should be its nature and its purpose, for only with such a justification could it come within their sanctions. Nor was it that they instinctively invested the struggle with the attributes demanded by their morality. In its origin the war was a war against war; and in their insistence upon this fundamental purpose they were the silent spokesmen of the nation. Thenceforward, they fought and thought for England, but it was an ideal England, neither wholly different from, nor wholly the same as the real—the England of generous impulse, by self-imposed knight-errantry the champion of every nation rightly struggling to be free, proud of a strength which was based upon the achievement of a civil liberty unequalled in the world.

Thus the war brought into the political life of England an idealistic force without parallel in her history. What was lavished at the end of the eighteenth century on the victorious democracy of France by our great poets, was given now to England herself by their descendants, and the gift sealed by a long drawn sacrifice of which, as the careless enthusiasm cooled, the determination hardened. We are not associating ourselves with the calculated slander of "the politician" by the "stunt" press when we say that our politicians during the war showed themselves unworthy of this new adhesion to the national strength. Perhaps they were not so much unworthy as unaware of it, for seeing that they led the nation into the conflict with clean hands it was never impossible that they should have retained the confidence of these sensitive and devoted minds. The war-measures taken were not inevitably matters of conflict or occasions of disillusion. Even the vexed issue of conscription itself would have been robbed of its sting, had there been a leader of moral strength enough to have silenced the yelpings of the press with a stern "No!" so long as conscription was unnecessary, and to have appealed frankly to the devotion of the nation when no other course remained. The *intelligentsia* was always ready to believe that the end would justify the means; but the end should have been proclaimed again and again, with ever-increasing resonance and definiteness: "Clean-handed we went into the struggle, clean-handed we will go out of it again." Instead of this, it was given the spectacle of leaders lacking the courage to resist the vile agitations of the press or the unlawful appetites of secret diplomacy.

Worse was to follow. The inability to resist shameful intrigues was evidence of moral weakness; but the revelation that the intrigues were inspired by Judases in the Government itself dealt the last blow to the faith of the *intelligentsia*. When weak honesty had been replaced by organized dishonesty and manifest corruption, the wells were poisoned. Suspicion became their second nature. They had borne the heat and burden of the day; they were prepared to receive only a penny for their reward; but the apprehension that their penny would assuredly be a bad one hardened into a certainty. They hoped, as we have said, desperately against hope, and against their better knowledge of Mr. Lloyd George, that some impulse of his youth might win a late triumph, but they hoped, as they knew, in vain. From the steps of his showman's car, striped

with buff and blue and wreathed in Union Jacks, they heard as in a dream the triumphant demagogue shouting at them that they were reactionaries, that they were the vested prejudices, the enemies of the people, while the vested interests (incorporated in the fat impresarios beside him on the steps) were the people's friends.

For them the temptation to blaspheme against democracy is well-nigh irresistible. Their impulse is to tear themselves away from the body politic in which they have merged themselves, and to hide themselves apart in caves and temples. But the impulse must not be obeyed. What remains of them must persevere in the resolve to rescue what remains of their sacrifice for the ideal for which it was made. The urgent question for them is how they are to stand fast and in alliance with whom. The weak honesty of the Liberal Party has already betrayed them too often; they are Liberals who have no use for the Liberal Party. It has no use for them. Labor remains. But their problem cannot be answered by the mere process of elimination. They seek a positive satisfaction, and their hesitations are not conjured away by their realization that they have no other choice. Let us be honest. They are not quite sure of Labor. They ask only that the equality of all men should be steadfastly pursued as an ideal; but they ask that this equality shall be real, and that its reality shall be guaranteed. On such an equality a structure of ideals can be raised which will be a temple of humanity. Will Labor guarantee them this?

#### THE WAGGON OF THESPIS.

TRADITION, not always a deceiver, made the founder of Greek drama a provincial and a vagrant "on the road," presenting at village after village on his rude waggon the medley of chorus and of description that went to make the masterpieces of Attic art. But this art, which in every country has sprung spontaneously from the soil, has always with the advancement of time and of culture come to be treated as a metropolitan affair; and the dramatic critics of to-day take up their judicial thrones in London, and thence pass their judgments on the forty or fifty "big names" that are set before a kindly public in their appropriate settings. With the exception of what may sometimes be found in a few leading dailies in the No. 1 Tour provincial towns, dramatic criticism does not exist outside London. Notices in the local Press are frequently written by advance agents, and then, of course, take the form of conventional puffs, mere accumulations of cliché and superlative. Thus it comes about that in the general mind real acting is synonymous with West End acting; all the thousands of hard-working people who endure the hardships of the Thespian waggon (and very grievous those hardships are under present conditions of travel, prices, and accommodation) are considered negligible, and the past, present, and future of the drama are discussed as though Shaftesbury Avenue were Britain and Londoners the only groundlings. This is profoundly unfair. Nearly every town of forty thousand inhabitants and over possesses a theatre as well as a music-hall, and at those theatres plays are being acted for nine or ten months in each year. There must be ten times as many actors and actresses employed in the provinces as in London, even giving to that elastic name the most generous interpretation. Accordingly any treatment of dramatic questions which ignores the provinces ignores much. Small groups of "intellectuals" in the very big towns may do great service to the art, but they cannot make that art national; the existence of a truly national drama depends on the existence of a critical public and of capable actors; depends, therefore, to a large extent on the provinces.

That the provincial audience is no more critical than the metropolitan audience is sadly true; the play is normally regarded as a treat, and consequently the flimsiest rubbish will satisfy. That the public will become more critical is devoutly to be hoped; but how this high end is to be attained is not for the moment our concern. But a point often overlooked and yet of genuine import-

ance for the dramatic future is the merit of provincial acting.

If we except the repertory theatres that arise from time to time and wither where they have flowered, if we except also the occasional original productions in the No. 1 towns, very little information or criticism finds its way into the unprofessional press about the myriads of touring companies. Let us admit frankly that the acting of these companies is not as subtle as much that is seen in London. Lines are spoken more openly to the house and not to the stage, points are more broadly made, business is more rudely elaborated. But the vital point is that the touring actor is always acting, always working at full pitch. He has to work. He does not come before his audience, as a London star comes, with a "name." Even the greatest provincial hero will only be known to a small part of his continually changing audiences, and he can never rely on the magical aid of a house whose sympathy is assured before a line has been spoken. The popular West End actor-manager knows his *clientèle*, and knows what is expected of him. Often enough he is not required to act, but only to be himself. Having the great gift of personality, he is only required to exploit that gift. Under different names and in different clothes, he plays the same part in the same plays year after year. It is not his fault; his master is the public. And just as an author who has made a success with a novel of a certain type is implored by his publishers to continue writing the same book for the rest of his life, so the actor who has once been the adroit liar must go on lying adroitly for ever, the henpecked husband must never escape from his wife, and the *roué* of charm must never desert from the rake's delightful progress. This may be profitable, but it is not all. And the result is the facile naturalism in acting, which begins by being an intense relief from the artificialism of the schools, and ends by being as tedious and sterile as the lamp-light realism of a modern novelist. However charmingly Mr. A. may blow his nose, however enchantingly Mr. B. may adjust his collar, however overwhelmingly "real" the yawn of Mr. C., even though the extreme attainments of these gentlemen may carry the audience through three acts of personal trifling, the result, albeit good for the box-office, is undeniably bad for art. The true actor is he who can play any part at short notice and under any circumstances, able by sheer intensity of imagination to breathe reality into all his work. The man, on the other hand, who has his plays written for him and his entrances and exits carefully worked up, while he may hold his public by simply being himself, is not an actor at all, but merely an entertainer. Indeed, one can foresee the London star of twenty years hence as a gentleman, certainly a most perfect gentleman, standing with one foot in the orchestra while he whispers to the stalls his so fascinating conversation, and adjusts his elegant tie. He will never, never leave the West-end, and will continue to adjust his tie.

The provincial actor is not so blessed. Plays are not written for him, nor entrances studied for his vanity. He has to play what he may, now farce, now comedy, now perhaps strong and "heavy" drama. He has not the sounding-board of a giant reputation nor the ease of acting always in the same house to similar audiences. His road runs from Plymouth to Aberdeen, and he must adjust himself accordingly. And all the time he must act. He dare not, if he would, adopt the fluent naturalism of a Londoner; for in that case he would not always "get across." Naturally enough, he adopts the technique which has stood him in good stead. Certain intonations, movements, gestures, tricks if you will, become part of him. This is in fact what is wanted. The writer can instance the criticism of a typical provincial playgoer passing judgment on two actresses touring in a popular play. A. had rendered her part with an easy naturalism that spoke of metropolitan experience, while B. (the lead) had given a capable display of customary technique; all the inflexions and turns and heavenward glances had been correct. "Yes," said the critic, "A. was all right, but B. was the actress." That is the eternal danger. Technique turns to trickery, art

to artificiality. The touring actor is stamped provincial, and, by the powers, forgotten.

The touring actor cannot presume. He has to be versatile, and he has always to work desperately hard. That is his great value as an asset for the future should a development of public taste ever permit a development of the drama. There are some who hope that a new drama may arise from independent groups of amateurs playing and producing for themselves. But spare-time acting can never achieve more than one three-act play in several months, and even then the amateurs must be exceptional to be effective. Regret it though we may, play-acting is the business of professionals, and if ever the theatre of this country is to rise to a more tolerable level it must be lifted through the ordinary medium. The first essential is the appearance of critical powers in the general run of audiences, and that, of course, is a condition not easily to be realized.

But should new tastes and tendencies arise there is no reason for the high-minded to suppose that the new plays could not be adequately acted. There are bad performers in the provinces as in London, but the level of talent is not low. We have seen that the actual work is often spoilt by an excess of technique which the public apparently enjoys, but in the large number of men and women who tour the country year after year, there is a fine reservoir of versatile capacity. Obviously, the secret of good acting lies somewhere between the excellent foppery of London, where talent is swamped in a mist of personal charm, and the grosser artificialities of the provinces, where it is overwhelmed by the horrors of the "produced voice." When repertories have arisen, either at the will of a Mæcenas or owing to the heroic efforts of a small band of enthusiasts, it has never been proved against them that the acting was deficient. In many cases, very heavy demands have been made on the players, and the utmost versatility has been necessitated by the wide variety of plays and parts. Yet it is the public, not the players, who have been found wanting. On whom, then, did the average repertory draw? On the big names, the London bill-toppers, the weekly ornaments of the photo-press? No such theatre could afford them, even if they were willing to abandon their far lighter work in town. The repertories have drawn, carefully but inevitably, on the waggon-slaves of Thespis, and these men and women of the road have shown that, when they are released from the bondage of the commercial drama, they can respond to the challenge. And, therefore, those whose hopes turn, however faintly, to the prospect of a regenerate English theatre, while they may as yet have little faith in the growth of an instructed and critical public, need have no doubt that if theatres and plays are found, the players will not fail them. For many of those who follow the waggon year in, year out, are weary of the wares they have to offer, and would gladly do finer work at a wage that would decently support them: and at the same time their hard journeying, corrupting in one sense, has yet taught them lessons unlearnt of their more fortunate and stationary fellow-workers.

#### SCIENCE IN RECONSTRUCTION.

SOMETIMES the student of science, pausing before a great discovery, sees a vision of a new world cast upon wonderful lines, beautiful, happy. The material is at hand. The architect is ready. But no one seems to be interested in it, and the vision passes. He sinks back into this humdrum world of waste and filth, and wonders if creatures who are content with it could ever be worthy of the structure of his dream. Some similar thought must pass through the mind of every thinking being as he gasps his way through an acrid fog, and reflects that he is suffering from the waste of products which ought to be used for heating and power, for dye production, or for fertilisers. The great amount of coal consumed during the war has at length drawn attention to the fact that this sort of fuel is limited, and that it is being consumed much too rapidly and in the most wasteful manner possible. An ordinary fire-grate is the most skilful

device for wasting coal that one could imagine. It consumes a small proportion of it without extracting its full heat value, and then allows the rest, with its valuable products, to fly up the chimney to make the menace of our autumn fogs.

It is not that men of science have not shown how such a state of things could be changed. Sir William Ramsay made some experiments on the possibility of turning coal-mines into great retorts, in which the coal could be consumed scientifically and its maximum yield be turned into electric power. Some such scheme must be adopted if we are to secure the cheap power which the nation requires. Electrical power could be supplied at an amazingly cheap rate from great central power stations through trunk lines to every part of the country. Not only could such power supply the most economical means of developing our industries, it could furnish the motive power for a new transport scheme. It could be used in every household for heating, lighting, and cooking. How different would the countryside look without its filthy railways, spreading a pall of soot everywhere, and wasting sulphur in the air! The necessary development in speed of transit to and from markets and towns could readily be obtained, and by abolishing the private use of coal everywhere there would be a remarkable increase in people's health and a great saving in every house from the lessened use of cleansing material. But the implications of such a scheme do not end here. Coal is one of the most wonderful substances in the world. The bye products obtainable from its proper consumption are almost innumerable. They embrace such commodities as carbolic acid, dyes, scents, oils, pitch, tar, sulphates; organic drugs like phenacetin and the constituents of saccharin. By the controlled use of coal all these bye-products would be saved, and not only would the world be fairer and healthier, but very much richer. It is strange that only now is the nation waking up to the fact that it has been squandering its wealth. But if the scheme suggested by the Coal Conservation Sub-Committee is adopted, it has been estimated that there will be an annual saving of £27,000,000. This would constitute a good beginning in the use of that willing servant, modern science.

But if science has its uses in the conservation and proper application of coal, it has not less important services to render to agriculture. It is merely just that Americans should look on with wonder when they see the old-fashioned plough at work. It is an anachronism, and unless there is some attempt to use modern machinery, we shall be left behind in the struggle with other countries. To continue on the old method is not merely to waste labor, itself a valuable commodity, but to waste land. There can be no chance of securing the maximum output of the country's broad acres until every labor-saving device has been introduced, so that one man may in future do the work of six. The land as well as the laborer demands due consideration. If it provides our food it also requires suitable food itself; and there has been much work devoted to this problem. Fertilisers can now be produced in this country. They can be made from the air, and with cheap power it would be more economical to make them ourselves than to transport them from the deposits in Chile. There is little limit to the amount which could be produced, and an intelligent Board of Agriculture would finance research to discover the means of producing the maximum results, and would be able to furnish figures for the approximate demand. There are, furthermore, the useful bacteria which, when suitably yoked, can be made to stimulate growth in a most striking manner. It is odd that so far-reaching a discovery should not have received more support from the Department which is concerned with the cultivation of the land. Mendelism, too, offers a wide field for research, and no one can say where its services may end. There was the problem of thousands of bushels of wheat destroyed by the fungus, rust. It is fortunately a problem no longer, for Biffen has found by judicious experiment on Mendelian lines how to produce a high-yielding rust-resistant wheat. The Russian wheat which resisted the rust and survived had a low yield. What was needed was a maximum yield. We have now secured

the rust-resisting property, and grafted it on to the high-yielding property. When wonderful achievements of this sort are possible, we are justified in taking spacious views. Mendelism has been successfully applied to stock-breeding, and there are signs that, with intelligent development, it may revolutionize agriculture.

Afforestation is as yet in its infancy, and, like coal, we have used trees as though they were inexhaustible. The whole world indeed has been acting like a wastrel in this respect. The uses of wood are constantly increasing. We use great quantities for the manufacture of paper. It is used for paving our streets, for pit props, for furniture, for telephone poles, and for railway sleepers. But despite its increasing uses, we are content to have the lowest percentage of land under tree plantation in Europe. The percentage in Austria-Hungary is eight times higher, and we have had to increase our annual import of timber during the last ten years by some £10,000,000. The war has made this a matter of the utmost importance. At present we entirely neglect the natural reproduction of trees, whereas Germany and France depend upon it for the schemes which have proved so great a success. There can be no question that vast areas could be laid under trees, and it is solely a matter for the State. A scientific scheme of State afforestation upon the broadest lines finds a healthy outdoor life for thousands of men, and would prove an extraordinarily good investment. The German State forests used to bring in a net income of £3,500,000, and we might, with every promise of success, imitate their scheme. There is no reason to make the State a profiteer by afforestation; but unless it deals with the problem soon there will be a great shortage of timber, while the land suitable for tree-growing and for little else is lying fallow and the men clamor for outdoor work.

It is about the utilization of our human material that science has most and least to say. Its inhibitions would make modern industrial life impossible, for it is the mere truth that the bulk of the people work too hard and too long, under bad conditions and with insufficient food. They are treated like machines. There is plenty of labor, so spendthrift methods pay. But a prudent State must remember that times are changed. Labor is no longer a commodity; it is a power, and it will be well to deal with the problem of manual work in the light of all that science can teach. A vast field has been opened by "scientific management." We have learned the obvious fact that there are ways of performing any particular motion which wastes human energy. A man may have his shoulder dislocated by catching a cricket ball, whereas another will catch it in such a manner that he feels no discomfort. This principle, applied to all the postures and positions which people assume for the performance of certain sorts of manual work, has resulted in the discovery of means to increase output with a decrease in the energy consumed. It has also been discovered that rest at certain intervals is more restful than at others, that after work has been done for a certain number of hours the output decreases by continuance. Such principles, applied to work everywhere, should rescue from the round of the week's toil greater leisure and more health to enjoy it. There has been a considerable amount of research into the vagaries of the worker's physiology, and it is possible that a judicious increase in the percentage of oxygen in the air in factories where heavier labor has to be done might be a fruitful line of development. Workers have the right to perform their labor in the least laborious manner, and where the body is consuming its oxygen and the air is becoming fetid at the same time, a process of poisoning must make great headway. It has even been found that there is an unwholesome effect in the mere immobility of the air, quite apart from its temperature or composition. Some means must be found for setting the air in motion in stuffy factories.

But this is a simple problem. Indeed, these are all simple problems. The more academic applications of science will only gradually make themselves known. Under the stimulus of the war the nation has had to look more and more to scientific workers who, if they were trusted, could certainly change the face of modern life.

New industries have grown up. Others have been reborn. The world is astir with invention and discovery; and unless vested interests stand in the way, change must come. But the expensive, poisonous, unsightly railways seem doomed to remain, whereas we might have clean, even beautiful, vehicles driven by electricity. Are we also to suffer ill-health and fail under the burden of the debt we have to bear from the wasteful and poisonous use of coal? Unless this problem can be firmly handled the city of our dreams has vanished, and we are back once more in the whirl and strain of our ugly, filthy towns.

## Short Studies.

### FROM A SICK TOWN.

In a remote, narrow bye-street, seated on a side-walk that has been washed away by the rain, against a broken wooden fence, a boy about five and a girl a little older. Both are fearfully thin and dressed in dark rags; the girl wears rusty brown trodden-down shoes of a grown-up person. The boy has a striped stocking on one foot, on the other a grey.

From the pale sky a lukewarm, ever so far away wintry sun shines obliquely down on them. Directly in front of the children there is a brown wall with a gigantic tightly shut door in it. The girl sits drowsing, her mouth half-open. The blue eyes of the little boy are fixed unwavering on the wall. Slowly he lifts his head, stares at the sun, screws up his face longingly and drawls.

"Want something to eat?"

"You won't get the chance," murmurs the girl sleepily.

She draws up her thin legs, covers them with her skirt, pinches her eyes together, and leans with the back of her head against the fence. And now the sun shines full into her bloodless face.

It is empty and quiet in the lane. From afar sounds the roaring and groaning of the city. The wan rays of sun fill the air with the sour sweat of the poisoned earth.

"Cat," says the boy smiling, and he nudges the girl in the knee with his dirty little fist.

The cat goes dragging along by the wall. She scarcely lifts her paws from the ground, and puts them down anywhere with none of her old fastidiousness. Her head is pressed down, the fur on her back sticks up, the ribs show plainly through, and the belly hangs like an empty bag. The sun is behind the cat, and her shadow has a long, formless head.

She stands still for a moment, looks with sad eyes at the children, gives a silent miaow, and as though about to fall any moment, staggers on again.

The girl scratches her head and says:

"She's going off to die. Look how weak she is."

The boy purses up his lips, sucks in a long breath and lets it out, crying longingly:

" . . . eat."

The girl looks after the cat and repeats:

"You won't get the chance."

MAXIM GORKY.

## Communications.

### MY EXPERIENCE OF BOLSHEVISM.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR.—I have been two years in Russia, engaged in relief work. I have been in Samara, in Moscow, on the Western frontier, in Astrakhan and the Caucasus, and quite recently in Petrograd. From time to time I have been in relation with Bolshevik commissars, and have found them well-disposed, and men, as a rule, with a sense of their responsibility. I was struck by the fact that those in responsible positions in Russia are mostly young men.

On the western frontier, which I visited at the end of May, the Government was making use of an existing organization, the "Union of Towns," for the relief of refugees. Thirteen thousand people were being fed at Orsha, and arrangements were being made for the supply of foodstuffs along the whole western frontier from other parts of Russia. Whether these arrangements have been prejudicially affected by the Allied occupation I cannot say.

In Astrakhan the relief is being carried out directly by commissars and committees working under a State department. I visited, in September, the commissar in charge of Armenian affairs, who is also commissar (minister) of the Interior in the republic of Astrakhan. Six million roubles had been assigned by the central department in Moscow for the relief of refugees in Astrakhan and the Caucasus. A commissioner had been sent into the Caucasus to link up existing relief committees with the State department. A sign that the department was bent on practical measures of relief was the fact that they were sending 30,000 yards of cloth into the Caucasus for the Armenian refugees. By the way, I might mention that an Englishman working under the Bolshevik relief department travelled with several comrades of the Red Guard on a journey of more than a week's duration in a goods wagon bringing the cloth from Petrograd to Astrakhan.

On my return to England, I find that there is a great discrepancy between what my countrymen expect to hear about Russia and what I can tell them. Where one is expected to describe scenes of bloodshed and riot in the streets of Moscow and Petrograd I saw no scenes of violence or disorder. The extreme shortage of food makes this somewhat remarkable. I should perhaps qualify the above statement by saying that there was one disturbance while I was in Moscow (I was there from the beginning of May to the middle of July), a disturbance occasioned by the murder of Count Mirbach by the Social Revolutionaries, which was promptly suppressed by the Bolshevik Government.

As to personal safety, I can only say that it was possible to travel unmolested from Moscow to the Southern limit of the Caucasus through Bolshevik territory. It is true that on my arrival at Vladikavkaz (August 18th), two days after the Bolsheviks had captured it from the Cossacks, there was looting by Ingush tribesmen, but by the third day it was put down by the Bolshevik administration. On the other hand, the only occasion when I was molested was on my return journey through a village belonging to our allies, the Cossacks, where some mountain tribesmen, allies of our allies, were engaged in dragging a woman out of the village to shoot her.

It may be urged that the preservation of public order signifies nothing more than the acquiescence in a reign of terror by a frightened population. In that case one would expect to find signs of a repressive police or unpopular martial law.

Since the first revolution there has been no police force; its functions have now fallen to the Red Guard. A little less than a year ago the Red Guard was a body containing heterogeneous and irresponsible elements. These are no longer conspicuous. The Committee system, which arose in an army which did not trust its officers, has gone, and officers promoted from the ranks have full authority and maintain discipline. In fact, the experiment of creating a disciplined army without offending the Socialist temper of the soldier seems to have succeeded. The difference between the Red Guards of nine months ago and those of to-day is very noticeable in their bearing. They now have the air of men confident in themselves and their cause, who are conscious that they share the faith and aspirations of the masses. The Red Army, which is directed by the Commissar for War in Moscow, is said to be a million strong. Nine months ago a few thousand men could with difficulty be scraped together from the highways.

It may be supposed that order both in the army and in the towns exists only in certain special parts of Russia. But the truth—not always known in England—is that from the Western frontier to beyond the Volga, that is to say, over the greater part of Russia, there is a federation of Republics and a uniform structure of Government. In the cases of Astrakhan and Saratov, the limits of the two republics seemed to correspond with those of the old governments of those names. In each there is a central Soviet, while in every town and village there is a smaller Soviet. The professional classes, teachers, doctors, chemists, &c., are represented by their Souz or trade union.

The confidence of the population in the stability of the Government is greater than it was earlier in the year.

Contrary to the expectations, not only of its opponents, but also of many of its supporters, it has survived the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the signing of which has actually increased Lenin's prestige in Russia. The Czechoslovaks, who were carrying all before them in the Spring, have retreated from the Volga into Siberia, and Lenin's popularity has greatly increased since the attempt to assassinate him.

There has lately been something like a cult of Lenin.

The failure of all plots, of which there have been plenty, to overturn the Government, combined with the weakness of the Social Revolutionaries, has made it clear to the Russians, even if it is not yet clear to us, that there is, at present, at least, no alternative party. Gorky has recognized this, and has joined the Government. Early in October he called a mass meeting in Petrograd in which he appealed to the Intellectuals to join forces with the Bolsheviks. The meeting had a great success. In view of the facts of the situation it is difficult to believe that anything short of intervention by foreign armies, which would involve the occupation and garrisoning of towns, both large and small, is likely to upset the Bolshevik Government.

The objection to the Soviet system likely to be most strongly held by Liberals is that it is not democratic. This is possibly true, but the Russians may possibly argue that a labor qualification for the franchise is at least as democratic as a property qualification.

The Soviet Government is an experiment, and to be blind to the experimental nature of Revolution in itself is to misunderstand it. Just as it is a mistake for us to wish to apply our own constitutional precedents in Russia, so it is a mistake to see in the Bolshevik application of Marxian doctrine the experiments of mere doctrinaires. Lenin is a doctrinaire in the full sense of the word, he never relinquishes one iota of the pure doctrine, but he is a doctrinaire at bay, and never fails to use an advantage when circumstances offer. Such a weapon, ready to the hands of the Bolsheviks, was the Industrial Soviet bequeathed by the Revolution of 1905.

The experiment would have been crushed by the Constituent Assembly, which we now know was not wholly representative of the Russian people because it was elected before the return of the younger generation from the front had remodelled the old-fashioned party machinery in the country. A parallel will suggest itself to many Liberals at the present time in the coming election in England. The constituent assembly would have been a reversion to the parliamentary type of representation which offers no attraction to the rank and file of the Russian people. The Soviet gives them that direct contact with the government, an outlet for that spontaneity of expression, which they are accustomed to in the Commune. The Industrial Soviet is a spontaneous development in a centre of industrial activity of the same instinct for communal action which finds its expression in the Mir and the village Shkod or meeting. We English have not the instinct for meeting. The most unforgettable impression left by a year and a half in a Russian village is the scene so constantly witnessed in front of the village hall. An apparent pandemonium; all are talking at once, no one apparently is listening to what another says. And yet pandemonium it is not—a conclusion is somehow reached. It can only be interpreted as collective thinking. Sometimes the whole crowd can be seen moving away at once to carry their conclusion into action. It is as mysterious as a swarm of bees.

What a contrast to our ideally elected parish councils!

Bolshevism rests on this instinct, and it seems to me that in the absence of it the widespread fears of Bolshevism in England are idle.—Yours, &c.,

R. REYNOLDS BALL.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE CHURCH AND THE ELECTION.

SIR,—In all the confusion of this regrettable election your call to "rally to Labor" really indicates the only way of escape from chaos and ruin. A new spirit is moving among men, which, welcomed and guided, may accomplish such an advance towards justice and peace as history has never yet recorded, but which, repressed and thwarted, may hurl us into a weltering abyss in which both the achievements of the past and the hopes for the future may perish. It is a choice of wild anarchy and total dissolution, or reasoned and willing progress towards a fundamental reconstruction of society. If the forcing of the election at this confused and unprepared moment has the effect of shutting out the soldiers and the working classes from adequate representation—as it might appear that it was actually designed to do—then nothing will save us from a resort to violence; and if a Parliament is returned which is only a brainless machine, controlled by bureaucrats or composed of those who do not intend, or lack the courage for, radical and far-reaching reforms, there will be attempts at "direct action," which would perhaps be less to be feared if they succeeded than if they failed.

The Coalition asks for an absolute mandate, yet without giving us any assurance that it is capable of establishing peace, whether international or industrial, on sure foundations. The Liberal Party is weak and divided, and seems unable to offer us anything but vague rhetoric. It is the Labor Party alone that has any programme, and if one is to vote for anything definite at all, there is simply no choice. And if only the thoughtful and serious would rally to Labor at this time they would save us from otherwise almost inevitable catastrophe.

Where is the Church going to throw its influence at this critical hour? Cardinal Bourne has reminded us recently that there are only two great internationals, Catholicism and Labor. Is the official fear of Socialism on the part of Catholics going to drive these two forces into opposition? If so it will mean dividing the forces of idealism and construction while Europe plunges into disorder and wanders in darkness for centuries to come. What is the Church of England going to do? Is it going to take the last chance of justifying its claim to be the Church of this people of England? And that means just now: Is it going to stand by the working classes of this country, or, in the hope of protection and privilege, look to the aristocracy and the propertied classes? It will certainly decide its future by its action now. And what is Nonconformity going to do? Turn to its often rejected, but undeniable, off-spring, as so many of our labor leaders are, or cling to the skirts of the magnates it has latterly produced?

I am not arguing the Church's self-interest, though it certainly lies with Labor, but pleading that she should do something to save the people by coming down definitely on their side. It means taking a side, but it is too late to argue neutrality, and the Bible takes sides right enough. I am not identifying the Kingdom of God with the Labor Programme. The Church is bound to be politically opportunist; for while no secular programme can satisfy her ideals, if we are to exercise our earthly citizenship at all we must choose that which comes nearest and provides the best economic basis for the spiritual revolution we believe in. I am not forgetting that the Labor Party is a party, and a class party at that; though by the latest definition of Labor, as consisting of those who work with hand or brain, it becomes the only class that has any right to exist; but the working classes are the vast majority, and they are the one absolutely necessary class, and therefore in any fair representation they must have the bulk of power, and in any stable order of society they must be the most securely based. Neither am I asking that during the next few weeks our pulpits should be given up to politics or personalities. All I ask is that the Prophets shall be carefully read to the people, the only true Gospel faithfully proclaimed, the peasant origin, constitution and commission of the Church recalled, and the people urged to translate their faith into votes; the glorious faith in the carpenter Messiah, in the Apostolic Church of the Fisherman, in the Creed which declares that Very God took the lowliest manhood in order to save us, in the Blessed Sacrament of Consecrated Bread, and in the Communion of the Common Table. Let the Church be faithful to its own charter and gospel these next few weeks, and it may save England for peace, for righteousness, for brotherhood, for true religion, and for all that life was meant to be and society ordained to secure.—Yours, &c.,

W. E. ORCHARD.

The King's Weigh House.

SIR,—It is quite true that Mr. Lloyd George has torpedoed the Liberal Party. He, at one time, boasted that he had torpedoed the "Conciliation Bill"; but he did not succeed in wrecking the cause of woman suffrage, which a few years later, without any help from Mr. George, sailed safely into port. In the same way, while it is true that many members of the Liberal Party have taken to the boats and left the ship, the ship of Liberalism has not yet sunk, and there are many people left on it, who, although apparently at present inarticulate, are determined to see that it sails the seas again under its own flag.

The Liberal Party is in a difficult position, but surely that is a reason why its friends should remain to support it. It has the best traditions of any party in the State, and even though all its leaders failed, the principles of Liberalism are on a sure foundation, and worthy of forming the basis of the best schemes of reconstruction. Why does not "A Wayfarer" remain with the Liberal Party and help to rally members to its old principles? Women, at any rate, can have little faith in the Labor Party while it continues to be dominated by the Trade Unions, but many of them believe that on the principles of Liberalism—the freedom of the individual, and freedom of opportunity for all men and women to develop and work along the lines best suited to each, which is the groundwork of these principles—their political faith can be built.—Yours, &c.,

PLEBS.

### THE POLICY OF THE PRESIDENT.

SIR,—The shadow of Lincoln is a shadow, which, as Carducci said of Vigil, has no trace of darkness.

This is not the first time that the United States has found itself in the presence of a prostrate foe. It is not the first time either that in the American public vast problems of reconstruction have presented themselves in the train of a victorious war. Sixty years ago the country had suffered as it cannot be said to have suffered in this campaign against Germany. It had to deal then with the passions of civil strife, complicated with racial problems and with economic interests of extremely difficult adjustment. Americans remember how, as long as Lincoln lived, that reconstruction proceeded. The one objective of the President was to heal the wounds of war. Grant gave Lee the benefit of Lincoln's generosity. The South was completely won over, and the bitterness of defeat was greatly mitigated. The Northern soldiers refused to shout or make other demonstrations when the ragged Confederates laid down their arms. Nor did the people of the North demand vengeance for the terrible losses of the four years' struggle.

Then Lincoln was assassinated. The policy of vindictiveness came into temporary control. Economic rivalry sprung up and was embittered. The South learned to resist the North and to wreak its spite upon the colored people. The South was saddled with its enormous war debt, and the economic policy of the country placed a handicap upon Southern production, and did nothing to build up Southern industry.

"Wilson," says Professor William E. Dodd, of Chicago University, "stands toward the world to-day as Lincoln stood sixty years ago toward this nation. President Wilson is undoubtedly the responsible leader of us all and of Europeans in very large measure. Yet the body of articulate men throughout the world have it in their power to make or mar the President's policies."

"For once we have for a leader a historian and a man who has shown that he can govern his own spirit. Mr. Wilson seems to have no theory to apply, only the method that promises to give mankind a better way than the old way. He believes that the oldest wrong may be righted, yet he would not right even a great wrong if the correction promised another wrong equally crying. He believes in democracy among men. The trouble with Germany is not that she is German, but that she is barbarous and needs to be democratic. If Germany had been even remotely

writing to a friend of mine a  
down two requirements—viz., “  
tion, but my wife desires a south  
Chillenden Rectory, Canterbury

**NOTICE.**—When “Corresp  
the writer's name or initials,  
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In such instances, or in the c  
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B.—

LORD CLIVE \*

At last we have got a Life of Clive which is worthy of its subject. Hitherto Clive, as great and as memorable in character, in intellect, and in the power of expression as he was in action, has lain under the grievous disability of imperfect biography. There has not only been no adequate Life of Clive, but till now the world has had little or no chance of reading the superlatively wise and statesmanlike despatches, letters, and speeches in which Clive not merely dealt with the troubles of the moment, but laid down for all time the principles which ought to govern individuals and nations in their dealings with Asiatics and Asian politics. But even worse than this neglect of Clive's doings and sayings was the fact that what little was known to the public about him was derived from what can only be described as Macaulay's brilliant caricature. That caricature is no doubt fascinating, incisive, and, like many caricatures in print and in line, sympathetic, and meant to be sympathetic. Yet for all that, and for all its many attractions, the famous essay is a caricature. In order to get a certain effect particular features are heightened and distorted and others suppressed altogether, until a man entirely different from the real man, and yet all the time with a kind of poignant resemblance, is produced. Macaulay's essay on Clive lives, and will continue to live, in literature because the author was a man of genius. But we must never forget that when we read and thrill it is not about the real Clive. The figure before us is as essentially a work of art as, say, Shakespeare's Henry V. Happily, however, the Clive whom Sir George Forrest has drawn for us in his two volumes, full, we are glad to say, of the *ipsissima verba* of his

\* *The Life of Lord Clive.* By Sir George Forrest, C.I.E. 2 vols. London: Cassell and Co. (3s. net.)

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democratized she would not have forced this great war upon the world.

"Further, Mr. Wilson believes that men have too long fostered wars by commercial rivalries and selfish tariff policies. He would not at once abolish 'high commerce' or tear down tariff walls; but he would limit high commerce and lower high tariff walls. He does not believe, from what he has publicly stated, that backward countries can at once set up successful democracies; but because they might stumble, as Mexico has so long stumbled, he sees no reason to prohibit them from trying to save themselves by governing themselves, even badly. He would help them honestly and fight off financial or other exploiters. These are all matters vital to world peace.

"More vital still is the absence of hatred in Mr. Wilson's make-up. He neither hates nor loves in large affairs. He reasons. He has said that the Kaiser is without honor. Some people distrust him because he does not repeat that saying every day. He knows that the German people cannot be wiped off the earth; and he would not wipe them off the earth if he could do so. Like Lincoln in 1865, he would draw them to himself in kindly fashion and read them the Sermon on the Mount, making sure that none of them carried concealed weapons about their persons. The President would emancipate the Germans, not crush or humiliate them."

Shall we not, all of us, endeavor to be thoughtful without hatred towards men, but with hatred towards the exploiters of men?—Yours, &c.,

ARTHUR LIVINGSTON.

New York. November 20th, 1918.

#### SCIENCE AND DISARMAMENT.

SIR.—Your very able contributor writes: "This question of disarmament is the key to every other" (November 16th, p. 183). That might be true in 1910, but is no longer so. War, the most murderous of wars, can be waged and won by a disarmed country—not with heavy guns or submarines, but with poison. Science, the unchained mad dog, has shown what might be expected from the new weapon, which has only just begun to overawe mankind. Imagine ten thousand so-called postal aeroplanes suddenly converted into poison and disease spreading machines—London and Paris stilled or bedridden overnight! every defensive power broken down by a desperate aggressor! Or must I remind you of the *atomic bombs*, dreamt of by Wells as early as 1912? To be brief: disarmament is no remedy. The only remedy, but a sure one, is the international control of every factory or laboratory. The world must know what possible evildoers are about. There must be a government inspection, huge premiums insured to informers, huge fines awaiting evildoers before they have completed their schemes. Yes; "the moment is great and the call urgent"; but we must realize what the call means, where the future danger for mankind really lies: with chemistry and biology.—Yours, &c.,

S. REINACH,

Member of the French Institute.

Paris. November 20th, 1918.

#### THE KAISER.

SIR.—Three years ago, viz.: on December 4th, 1915, you were good enough to publish a letter from me, in which, after discussing certain proposed conditions of peace, as suggested by Mr. Masterman and others, I wrote: "But is there not yet another condition, which, if it could be secured, would be an inestimable boon to humanity? We sent Napoleon to exile as a danger to mankind. What of the Kaiser? Could anything more contribute to a durable peace than the expulsion of the Hohenzollerns? . . . That, surely, is a consummation devoutly to be wished."

Well, Sir, it may now, perhaps, be said that we have seen "the expulsion of the Hohenzollerns," which, when I wrote three years ago, seemed to be so far off. But have we? Neither the Kaiser nor the Crown Prince have, I believe, made any formal act of abdication. Meantime the arch-criminal is living in luxury in Holland, close to the German frontier, and, doubtless, ready to return should a favorable opportunity present itself. But is this blood-stained wretch—the very *fons et origo malorum*—to escape all punishment for his evil deeds? If we sent Napoleon to St. Helena, what ought to be done to this infinitely worse offender? I suggest that he ought to be handed over to the Allies to take his trial for murder and innumerable other crimes. But, however that may be ordered, is it not certain that there can be no satisfactory League of Nations should Germany be represented by any member of the pestilent Hohenzollern gang? The Hapsburgs have gone, let us see that the Hohenzollerns follow them.—Yours, &c.,

G. G. GREENWOOD.

November 21st, 1918.

#### THE NEW SPIRITUALISM.

SIR.—Will you grant me space for a few remarks on this subject which was so ably and opportunely treated by Mr. Edward Codd in his letter to THE NATION of November 16th? Mr. Codd states that the evidence adduced for the alleged manifestations consists of unverified assertions, and that no proof can be reached concerning the question whether these manifestations are facts or fictions, unless they can be submitted to the simple conditions of scientific scrutiny. All the most prominent of the modern spiritualists, however, some of whom boldly claim that their assertions have been scientifically proved, render it practically impossible for any scientific method of investigation to be applied. For they accept without question or test the very conditions laid down by the mediums as necessary factors in the appearance of the alleged phenomena. Witness, as one example out of many, the allegation of mediums that they are in a state of "trance" during the manifestations.

With regard to the mental harm done to many persons who are in the habit of consulting mediums, it is known to many medical practitioners, including those who have made mental pathology their special study, that the pursuit of the spiritualistic cult often leads to the development of serious mental disturbance, and renders many who are predisposed to insanity an easy prey to this disease. I have myself seen cases of this kind, and have heard of many from experienced specialists. In his recent book on "Spiritualism and Sir Oliver Lodge," Dr. Mercier, the well-known psychologist, dwelling on this matter, gives an important quotation from a Report issued not long ago by Dr. G. M. Robertson, the Superintendent of the well-known Asylum for the Insane at Edinburgh, which points out and illustrates this grave danger. "Dr. Robertson," says Dr. Mercier, "like myself, comes to this matter with an open mind; he has no prejudice against spiritualism."

In the interests of truth and of the community at large, this modern revival of what is undistinguishable from many ancient beliefs now regarded as superstitious, should either be proved to be founded on fact or publicly exposed as pernicious. The burden of proving it true is clearly on those who declare it as such. This doctrine, especially as set forth in quite recent times by Sir Oliver Lodge and others, has led to the rapid appearance of a large number of so-called mediums ready to place their credulous clients in communication with their dead relatives and friends.

At present the case stands thus. Scientific criticism maintains that the allegations of spiritualists rest on no demonstrative evidence, but are explicable by the assumption that they are the outcome of deception and credulity. This assumption has been proved to be true in many cases where tests have been applied. It seems to me that if a number of well-accredited inquirers, free from any preconcerted *will to believe* these doctrines, were to determine to investigate the claims of a number of the most successful mediums of to-day, on the condition that tests against possible fraud be fully permitted, some valuable step might be made. A report of the kind of tests thus proposed, even if such tests were disallowed, would be far from useless at this moment, when the popular prophets of occultism are advising those who wish to inquire genuinely into these matters, to read books written by adepts and get into touch with mediumistic circles; in other words to *acquire first the will to believe*, and thus to stifle their spirit of true inquiry.

In default of some definite proof of these spiritualistic allegations, their promulgators should at least be widely discredited, and the performances of so-called mediums forbidden by law.—Yours, &c.,

H. BRYAN DONKIN, M.D.

London. November 25th, 1918.

#### A WARNING TO THE COALITION.

SIR.—It has been suggested in the "Manchester Guardian" of the 18th instant, that the present political situation is the outcome of fear, on the part of the proposed Coalition, of future labor developments.

The decision of the Labor Party to remain outside the Coalition was a wise one, as much for the future of the present possessing parties as for the industrial workers themselves.

An independent Labor Party, free from government restrictions and Government liabilities, and able to voice and fight for labor interests, will provide, ready to the hand of whatever Government may be in power, complete and authentic details of the requirements of labor in the reconstruction of the world. Not only would any attempt to neglect or overrule this voice of labor be the height of folly and stupidity, it would also be disastrous. The Labor Members of the Coalition may well represent a portion of labor, but it cannot be asserted that they represent a majority or even an important minority. The "Labor Party" undoubtedly represents the balanced central labor opinion in the country. Sectarian and extremist influence admittedly exists; examples are the "British Workers' League," the supporters of Mr. Havelock Wilson, and other similar societies and divisions with reactionary and nationalist views. But they represent an unimportant minority of true labor interests. The trade unions form the backbone of the Labor Party, and thus the Labor Party represents "organized Labor." As such, the representatives of the Labor Party who may be returned to Parliament may justly demand the right to voice labor requirements and the labor point of view in all bills dealing with industrial reconstruction.

Any attempt to neglect or curtail this right will be proof to the working classes that the Coalition is indeed the result of an understanding between all the possessing and capitalist classes determined to retain possession of the power of direction of labor in capitalist interests.

Once let this be realized, and no power on earth will save the country from revolution. Constitutional revolution may be, commencing in sectional and union strikes, continuing in organized general strikes throughout the country, and ending inevitably in the employment of methods now only advocated by extremists.

Let the Coalition Government be warned in time. The voice of labor, both in Parliament and outside it demands recognition. The voice of organized labor is best heard to-day in the councils of the Labor Party.—Yours, &c.,

D. LEIGH AMAN.

United Services Club. November 19th, 1918.

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## "THE ONE THING NEEDFUL."

SIR.—With reference to an article in your issue of November 16th, entitled "The One Thing Needful," it may be of interest to call the attention of your readers to an article by General Verraux, which appeared in "L'Oeuvre," on November 23rd. The French General takes the same lines as your contributor, insisting on the possibility and the necessity of complete disarmament. "What we expect," he writes, "is not only a durable peace, as the common phrase goes, but a permanent peace, a peace that no nation can break; and to assure this, there is only one means—general disarmament." "Engage yourselves," he goes on, "under the control of a permanent international tribunal, with full powers of investigation, to make no more guns, mitrailleuses, or rifles. A police does not need such arms." With a world thus disarmed, he points out, a sufficient sanction against the wrong-doer would be the economic boycott. "Put it out of the power of humanity to injure itself. Substitute for machines that kill machines that make corn grow. Transform your barracks into schools, and your ambulances into sanatoria. Make professors of your officers, and convert military instruction into instruction without a label."

When soldiers so talk, how ought not civilians to talk? But, alas! civilians are more militarist than soldiers.—Yours, &c.,

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

## THE OFFICIAL AND THE MEN.

SIR.—A few days ago we received a wireless press message giving an extract from Sir Eric Geddes' speech, in which he commented on the disappointment of the men of the Grand Fleet at not "licking" the Germans. May I use your columns to protest against the shocking levity of a man in his position in using the language of a schoolboy to refer to naval warfare? Apart from his language, he is wrong in his facts. I have talked to numbers of officers and men who have fought in this war, and not one wished to go through another battle. Except, possibly, amongst the youngsters, the predominant feeling was probably one of extreme thankfulness that the war had come to an end without the necessity of a general action.

After Jutland, I have heard it said that there were streets in Portsmouth wholly occupied by widows. Does Sir Eric Geddes bear in mind this aspect of "licking" the Germans?

What, however, is more important than one's disgust at this sort of language is the fact that it betrays a state of mind which looks on war as a sort of glorified game—just that spirit of militarism against which we thought we were fighting.—Yours, &c.,

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER, R.N.

H.M.S.—At Sea. November 16th, 1918.

## TOO CLEVER BY HALF.

SIR.—"Power is Poison," so said Archbishop Fénelon long ago, and this is still true. We can recall that Mr. Arthur Balfour, who has rendered such conspicuous service in recent years, when Prime Minister, hung on to office long after it was obvious that he was not supported by the country. Two results happened. His party thirteen years ago received the most emphatic knock-out blow which it had never received since the Reform Act of 1832, and the title "Politician" became a term of contempt, and still is so. Power had proved in his case to be poison. Similarly Mr. Lloyd George, with the glamour of his marvellous armistice, has rushed his appeal to the country. Everyone who opposes or criticises him is now accused of being actuated by faction. Weak men will be frightened to show themselves in the face of this accusation, and the prospects are that Mr. Lloyd George will sweep the country, and the term "Politician" be further degraded.

What is desirable at this moment above everything else is to know the mind of the fighting men, the soldier and the sailor, and the laboring man. They are busy and preoccupied, and before they will know what is happening, they will find that it is all over, and that, so far as they are concerned, there may be nothing further to be said for five years. Surely this is being too clever by half; but power, as the Archbishop says, is poison, and the poison seems to be working very effectively.—Yours, &c.,

P. W. C.

## THE CASE OF NORTH SLESVIG.

SIR.—In these days almost any Allied newspaper has some reference to Alsace-Lorraine. In the same manner, practically the whole world upholds the just claim of freedom for Poland. The province of Slesvig, which was unjustly torn from Denmark in 1864, has fewer champions in the Press, although lately the question has been discussed extensively in the Scandinavian papers, and to some extent in a few leading British papers.

Since the war, in spite of Prussia's frantic efforts to suppress the nationality of the population, the northern half of the province down to a line Flensburg-Tonder with a salient southwards and including the Isle of Als, has remained true Danish in language, tradition, and sentiment. As late as 1911 I travelled extensively on bicycle and foot through that part of Slesvig. Wherever I went I spoke Danish only, and never once had I to make use of the German language. I came into intimate touch with the population, and heard from their own lips about the Prussian oppression in church, school, law-courts, yes, even in the homes; and it was pathetic to hear of their hopes

of reunion with their mother country. The suffering and misery of the people during this war can hardly be imagined. Their young men have had to fight against their sympathies and conscience, and thousands have been forced to lay down their lives for a cause that was not theirs. But even then, in 1916, when I was in Denmark, I heard from Slesvigers there that it was still their hope that "this was the darkest hour before dawn."

These Danes in North Slesvig should not be forgotten at the peace settlement. In Scandinavia, people like Mr. Branting and Mrs. Ellen Key have written on their behalf, and proposed that President Wilson should include as point 15 in his peace programme the restoration of Danish Slesvig after a free *plébiscite* has been taken.

Paragraph 5 of the Prague treaty which settled the Austro-German war provided that "North Slesvig shall be reunited to Denmark, if the inhabitants by a free vote declare their desire to that effect." But Prussia never fulfilled paragraph 5. The time has come now for the settlement of this question.

If Prussia would admit the injustice done to Danish Slesvig, and promise redress at the peace conference, it would signalise her change of spirit. She has not done it; in fact, Dr. Solz only a fortnight ago refused to open the question in the Reichstag.

It now remains for the Allies to take it up; and it is impossible to see how they can avoid it if President Wilson's principles are to guide them at the conference table.—Yours, &c.,

F. BRAAE HANSEN.

College of Hygiene, Dunfermline.

## THE COALITION PROGRAMME.

SIR.—In the Coalition Programme it is stated that one of the objects of the Government is "to create a Second Chamber which will be based upon direct contact with the people." No indication is given as to how this new Chamber is to be elected. Lord Bryce's Committee recommended proportional representation, but his scheme was one of indirect election. If the House is to be directly elected, as the above words would imply, should not the same principle be adopted?—Yours, &c.,

JOHN H. HUMPHREYS, Secretary.

The Proportional Representation Society,  
82, Victoria Street (Flat 24),  
Westminster, S.W. 1. November 22nd, 1918.

## Poetry.

## TO EVERYMAN.

ALL things search until they find  
God through the gateway of thy mind.

Highest star and humblest clod  
Turn home through thee, to God.

When thou rejoicest in the rose  
Blissful from earth to heaven she goes:

Upon thy bosom summer seas  
Escape from their captivities:

Within thy sleep the sightless eyes  
Of night revisage Paradise:

In thy soft awe yon mountain high  
To his creator draweth nigh:

This lonely tarn, reflecting thee,  
Returneth to eternity:

And thus in thee the circuit vast  
Is rounded and complete at last,

And at last, through thee revealed  
To God, what time and space concealed;

He who made earth and sea and sky,  
Made thee the apple of His eye.

And O when thou dost look in love  
On dying sparrow, or wounded dove,

Dost pour thy tender healing grace  
Upon some forsaken face,

Dost whisper in penurious ear  
A little word of loving cheer,

My senses waken and I see  
God's face, and hear His voice, in thee.

EDITH ANNE STEWART.

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\* \* \*

AN embarrassing, provocative, excellent little book came my way recently, called "Songs of the Ridings," by Professor F. W. Moorman. Professor Moorman tells how he set forth into the Ridings, philologically bound. But, disconcertingly, he came to find that men and women were more interesting than words and phrases, and "my attention was attracted from dialect speech to dialect speakers." He, "a bourgeois professor," as he puts it with appealing modesty, discovered that out of the mouth the heart speaketh. So Professor Moorman resolved to write a little volume of verse (the dramatic monologue) in the local idiom, in the hope that these people, to whom general literature was inaccessible, would read it and satisfy something of the "hunger for poetry" that was in their hearts. "Poetry," said Shelley, "is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds," and it is time, says the Professor, "that the working men and women of England were made partakers in our inheritance of wealth and joy." Working men have been ostracized from poetry since the fifteenth century, when Robin Hood waged war against the medieval capitalists and the folk of the trades-guilds acted their miracle plays. At the Renaissance poetry went to Court, and the "rude mechanicals" were speedily transformed into the Lord Chamberlain's players. But we are beginning to have a notion that "the working man needs something more to sustain him than bread and the franchise and a fair day's wage for a fair day's work."

\* \* \*

PROFESSOR MOORMAN concludes that "literature may be used as a mighty weapon in furtherance of political and social justice, and that the pied pipers of folk-song have the power to rouse the nation and charm the ears of even the Mother of Parliaments." But I think that the Professor might have expanded this last sentence and given it the prominence it merits. So long, that is to say, in Defoe's words:—

"The men of labor spend their strength in daily struggling for breath to maintain the vital strength they labor with; so living in a daily circulation of sorrow, living but to work, and working but to live, as if daily bread were the only end of a wearisome life, and a wearisome life the only occasion of daily bread."

—so long is a reconciliation between the arts and democracy an idle fantasy. I will not labor this argument—since I have already done so in this page—but content myself with assuming that four conditions have to be realized before literature can become once more the *vox populi*—(1) the end of superfluous drudgery, (2) the principle of live and let live, (3) that of work for use and not for profit, (4) that of work that is good and worth while in itself.

\* \* \*

BUT there is a further difficulty in Professor Moorman's choice of dialect as "the working man's poetic diction—a poetic diction as full of savour as that of the eighteenth-century poets was flat and insipid." In the first place, dialect is not a living and expressive, but a dying speech. Even in Yorkshire, I imagine, it survives only in traditional retrospect—or, to put it more cautiously—the children are forgetting the speech of their fathers. It is becoming less and less natural-like. In the South of England, dialect has certainly all but completely disappeared—even in memory. The neglect into which the beautiful dialect lyrics of William Barnes, the Dorset poet, have fallen, is, I am afraid, conclusive evidence. Not only have few Dorset people ever heard of him, but even his farmer relatives know not his

work, but his personality. What is much more to the point, they do not understand him if they read him. Dialect is no longer a common speech, and, therefore, no longer appropriate to be the symbol and content of popular and universal ideas. Alas! the only intercommunicative and national language (both of town and country) to-day is that of the daily and Sunday Press—a corrupt, pseudo-Latinized, bastard jargon that has not the power to express a generalization or an abstract idea on the one hand, or the personal, concrete feelings of common folk on the other.

\* \* \*

SECONDLY, is dialect a desirable end in itself? Surely the things to aim at are, to begin with, a respect for the human being, and, then, a common consciousness of common ideas and emotions. If we accept the first of these postulates, it is no paradox to say that Henry James is an apostle of an art, "of the people, for the people," if not "by the people"; since he assuredly was no Olympian, he assuredly dwelt among men, loved them, and differentiated between them with the subtlety and intensity of true vision. A popular literature cannot be achieved *per saltum*, and the preliminaries point not to combining but to splitting up. To-day we are herded and combined, with the result that our stock of ideas is reduced and made uniform. A few type-ideas which are not truly representative (since the multitudinous ideas of a great number of people, though not killed, give place to them and retire into the recesses) dominate and voice a people's mind and are accepted as common currency. Nor, when we say "a people's mind," are we surrendering to the same error. Nature and art play infinite variations upon extremely few themes—upon one theme, which may be called the glory of God, or anything you like. But the theme is not lost in the variations or the variations in the theme, and democracy therefore is a very real thing indeed, since it is expressive of and in harmony with the divine law of the universe. Leonardo says in his Notebooks: "A good painter has two chief objects to paint, man and the intention of his soul." A literature, that is to say, which is sick of expressing a few type-ideas of the middle classes will not rectify matters by expressing a few type-ideas of a trade union. No, it will see man, a created and creating being under God's heaven, by seeing and giving a lead to the inward and suppressed feelings of this man and that man, feelings which are significant and valuable in themselves, not as they relate to their class or their interests or their divisions or their prejudices. The disintegration of a society can be a fearful thing, a nemesis Greek in its destructiveness, but the disintegration of mankind into separate human beings is a condition not only of popular literature but of all art, life, and progress. Jules Michelet in "L'Oiseau" did not see birds in species and orders; he saw them as souls and persons.

\* \* \*

BUT inasmuch as literature will see individual ideas and feelings in individual men and women, it will see that a great many of those feelings and ideas, variously expressed, belong to our common nature and our common humanity, and, so belonging are universal, and, if universal, mystic in beauty and infinite in their power of expansion. When peace came, for instance, the common consciousness of men suddenly rose up from the depths and was revealed—even if only negatively, in the aspect of relief from anxiety and suffering—and he who could have expressed that consciousness in noble and fitting language would have been a democratic poet, as Shelley was, as Blake was, who did not write in dialect and may not be read by the working classes. So, when Shakespeare (who hated the mob) wrote: "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded by a sleep," he was writing democratic, popular, poetry. Language, therefore, is not really the relevant issue. "That figure is most worthy of praise," to quote Leonardo again, "which by its action best expresses the passion which animates it," and if a common denominator of common ideas and emotions be found, the highest common factor of language will find itself. For it is not our great poets who are to blame, because the working classes do not read them; it is not the latter's fault, because they do not read the poets. But who and what are responsible, it were better for them that they were cast into the sea.

H. J. M.

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## TABLE-TALK.

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At the same time—perhaps it is only since Lamb wrote—most of us have a general picture in our minds of the ideal essayist. We endow him with humor, pensiveness, tolerance, grace of words, and a bundle of kindred characteristics. He is a friendly person, a man of whim, not a preacher and yet on the side of the angels. He impresses his portrait on his work, either boisterously or shyly, and to read him is to sit in good company. His sentences flow from him easily as table-talk, and one subdues one's own interests pleasantly to his, whether he discourses of his books or his boots, of his sins or his socks, of immortality or his liking for bad cigarettes. No essayist in recent times has made friends in this fashion with all sorts and conditions of men so successfully as "Alpha of the Plough," who has now put together a second book, "Leaves in the Wind," of his ever-enjoyable essays in the "Star." Compared with him, nearly all the other essayists of our time seem arrogant and anti-popular. Mr. Belloc is at ease in Zion—or at least in anti-Zion: "Alpha of the Plough" is at ease in the Strand. He shakes hands with the average man as even Mr. Lucas, with all his affability and charm, does not do. He possesses a sort of democracy of the heart, and one can fancy him feeling perfectly at home in almost any society of men save at a Court levee in short breeches. One can think of no other writer who has used the essay as a means of genial intercourse with John Smith in this way since Mr. Jerome wrote "The Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow"—a book, it will be remembered, highly esteemed by Tolstoy. Mr. Jerome, however, with all his gifts—and they were more admirable gifts than is sometimes admitted—achieved his popularity at the expense of the literary graces. "Alpha of the Plough" is happier in this respect. There is the sense of the good tradition of writing in his work. He is not exclusively John Smith's. The professor as well as the postman is his brother. He is a citizen of the republic of literature; he has breathed the same atmosphere as the poets, and knows the speech—including the small talk—of that delightful world. The best of all his essays, perhaps, are those humorous fantasias on his own experiences, such as that "On Being Called Thompson." But he writes out of an abundance of reading as well as of experience. Many of the essays in his new book are overcast by the melancholy of war-time, but there is more of laughter and faith than of tears in his pages. "Leaves in the Wind" is a reconciling book. Humorous, kindly, sympathetic, it popularizes but never vulgarizes the cardinal virtues, and, in the

Dickens tradition, ought to be a more effective propagator of Christmas cheerfulness and charity than either the sermons or the jests of a bench of bishops. The book has been charmingly decorated by Mr. Clive Gardiner, who has caught much of the drollery as well as of the pensive spirit of the essays.

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Mr. E. S. P. Haynes is more indifferent to literary form than either "Alpha of the Plough" or "Solomon Eagle." There is a good deal that is interesting, however, and much that is amusing in his little book "Personalia." The chapter we have enjoyed most is that entitled "A Memoir of Old Humphrey," the subject of which is George Mogridge, a writer of tracts that seem to have had some vogue in the first half of the nineteenth century. We almost suspect Mr. Haynes of inventing this inimitable character. The names of some of Mr. Mogridge's works—"The Sabbath-

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breaker reclaimed, or Thomas Browne," "The Infidel Blacksmith," "John Tompkins, the Dram Drinker"—are almost too good to be true. One would like to imagine that a writer of piety so thorough-going would have been a friend in trouble acceptable in any home, and Mr. Mogridge seems to have been always ready to play the part of a friend in trouble. Even in those days, however, Mr. Mogridge's sympathy seems occasionally to have had an irritating rather than a calming effect. Mr. Haynes quotes one passage in which Old Humphrey complains concerning a bereaved father to whom he paid a visit :

"When we paid him a visit of condolence, a bear robbed of her whelps could hardly have been more irascible."

We do not doubt that Old Humphrey, in a truly forgiving spirit, slipped a copy of "The Sabbath-breaker Reclaimed," or "John Tompkins, the Dram Drinker," on to the hall-stand on his way out. It is astonishing to learn that even the writer of works so edifying as these was not entirely free from the common troubles of authors with their publishers. His biographer, quoted by Mr. Haynes, describes one strangely humiliating incident in Mr. Mogridge's literary career :—

"A publisher to whom he had offered a small manuscript for £10, placed it flat on his counter and measuring it with his hand said, with a consequential air, that he had bought manuscripts double the height for five."

Other essays in Mr. Haynes's book take us among old family papers and lawyers' good stories. In two of them he writes of friends killed in the war, Edward Thomas and Rupert Brooke among them. When on the subject of the war, Mr. Haynes is rather inclined to write the kind of sentence that seems to us just touched with humbug, as when he says: "The tragedy is now not so much to die as to survive." But when he gossips about facts rather than indulges in war-time generalizations he is good company.

Mr. G. S. Street's book, "At Home in the War," is interesting enough as an attempt to record the mood in which the stay-at-home lived through the early years of the war, but it seems to us to be a little lacking in frankness. Mr. Street writes about the war somewhat in the temper of a churchwarden addressing the boys' brigade. He again and again sentimentalizes where he ought to observe. "Classes? Who thinks of classes?" he writes, and he does not sufficiently realize that though the background of war has revealed the heroic in man as more heroic than we could have dreamed, so it has revealed the knave and the fool in man as even more knavish and foolish than we could have dreamed. The war population of England has been as varied as the peace population, and a literary artist of Mr. Street's standing ought to have been able to keep himself free from the cheap muzziness of the conventional writer of war books. It is the duty of a man of letters to preserve his sense of the eternal drama of good and evil in all circumstances, and to see it as it is enacted in the lives of those about him. Mr. Street seems to have put this sense away in a box for the duration of the war, and in the result his book fails to give us a living image of either the magnificent heroism or the loathsome greed, either of the idealism or of the hysteria that have been in conflict in England during the last four years. All we would have asked of Mr. Street was a frank little account of human nature. Instead of that, he has given us an appreciation in the tone of an address by Lord Curzon, a sermon by the Bishop of London, or a leading article in almost any paper on The Meaning of the Empire.

#### THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE.

**"The Trust Problem."** By JEREMIAH WHIPPLE JENKS, Ph.D., LL.D., New York University, and WALTER E. CLARK, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, College of the City of New York. (Putnam. 10s. 6d. net.)

It is not surprising to learn on the authority of the publisher that the work of which this is a new edition, is widely used as a text-book in American schools and colleges. It is exactly the sort of text-book that the great Trust magnates who found colleges and universities, would desire to place in the hands of the unsophisticated student. In form, it is an impartial examination of the economic,

social, and political results of the Trusts; in fact, it is an exceedingly astute apology for their operations. Every argument in favour of the Trusts is stressed; every argument against them is played with. All the awkward facts are slurred over, minimized, qualified, limited, even interred in a parenthesis which the careless student may miss altogether. Take for instance this passage (see page 192):—

"If however, as seems to be the case, a real saving is effected by combination, though individuals may suffer, the working classes as a whole will be benefited not merely by the reduced price of the article itself (*if the Trust permits it to be reduced*), so far as they are consumers, but also within a comparatively short time by the increased demand which will come for their services through the increased demand for the goods, brought about by lowered prices."

Now the parenthesis we have italicized constitutes a complete begging of the question, and renders the whole of the reasoning in the paragraph absolutely fallacious. Yet the student will be very apt to overlook those eight words, and to accept the conclusion as a fact.

While, in form, this work is an impartial examination of the problem, its real object comes out quite clearly when we find the authors, towards its close, eulogizing the state of New Jersey, because it has allowed its company laws to be used to make the state the refuge of so many great Trusts, while all its neighbors have sought in union with the Federal Government to restrict and limit their operations. New Jersey deliberately encouraged this growth of Trusts and has benefited financially by the taxation it has been able to impose on them. Our authors call her policy a "liberal" one; they might as well apply that misused adjective to the Prince of Monaco, who allowed M. Blanc to set up a gambling hell in his dominions after all the adjacent states had driven him out of their territories. The Principality of Monaco has profited by this policy; so has the State of New Jersey.

Our authors begin by dwelling upon the economic losses which attend the policy of unrestricted competition in language which any modern collectivist would endorse. The unnecessary commercial travellers, the needlessly frequent visits to the retailer, the waste of advertising, are all insisted upon, while the student is reminded that combinations by concentrating manufacture enable a cheaper production, not only because of the increased scale of output, but because badly-equipped, or badly-situated plants can be closed, and production carried on in a few large and well-chosen factories. As they proceed, we discover some of the items on the "contra account"—how the Tinplate Trust was formed on a basis of paying 18,000,000 dollars for the plants taken over, whereas the promoter, Judge W. H. Moore, of Chicago, received 10,000,000 dollars in stock to pay him for his services and for his legal and other flotation expenses besides pocketing whatever profit he could make by buying the plants for less than the 18,000,000 dollars the Trust paid. At this rate the savings on commercial travellers' salaries are soon eaten up, and our authors reluctantly reveal that large sums have been paid to officials of banks and investment companies as bribes to induce them to accept as securities for loans, the "undigested securities" of the Trusts. Watered capital is so notorious that it has to be admitted that it often forces the officers of the Trusts to "push prices as high as the market will bear" in order to pay dividends upon it. The objection that the Trusts lose the advantage of detailed inspection by the owner is brushed aside, but 150 pages further on we find the unobtrusive admission: "that the tendency in great corporations toward nepotism is strong cannot be doubted." The bribery of legislators and public officials by the Trusts is not denied, but the blame is thrown on the tempted and the tempter is whitewashed. Fortunately, the famous Archbold letters, stolen from the Standard Oil Trust letter-books in 1908, are evidence that the offers of money for votes came from the Trusts who profit by them. "You have been long enough in politics to know that no man in a public office owes the public anything," said Mark Hanna, when he was trying to persuade Mr. Watson, the Attorney-General for Ohio, to drop the suit which he had commenced to enforce the Anti-Trust Law against the Standard Oil Trust in that State. Again, direct frauds in weighing sugar for customs duties were proved against the Sugar Trust, but our two profes-

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BY

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nional whitewashers have their answer ready: "That is a matter of personal character, not of business organization."

Their dealing with the Labor question is equally typical of their methods. They tell the student that if competition is kept down the Trust will take the larger part of the profit "at first," but it soon will be compelled to divide it with the consumer and the wage-earners "if they are well-organized and insistent." "Much virtue in an 'if.'" They admit on another page that the Steel Trust, the greatest of the tribe, has adopted the policy of refusing to deal with the unions of their workmen. "In another and later instance, where the unions were unusually persistent, and, as the corporation thought, unjust, it eventually removed the machinery and dismantled the plant rather than yield." What is the use of telling the student that "well-organized and insistent" workers will be able to secure a share in the profits of combination when the monopoly possessed by the Trusts enables them to deal in this Tsarist manner with organized workers who are "unusually persistent"? One might as well defend militarism on the theory that "well-organized and insistent" Social Democrats would be able to restrict its ravages and atrocities.

The two professors devote many pages and many elaborate charts to the attempt to prove that Trusts have not raised prices. We take the case of petroleum, because that is the one on which most evidence is available. We note that the professors' charts are based on the price of refined "export oil." It happens very conveniently that export oil has been kept—until the war—at a comparatively moderate figure by the Standard because it was faced by the competition of Russian, Rumanian, Sumatran, and Burmah oil, and has also been threatened by hostile legislation in certain European countries. The converse of this is proved by the rise in prices which the professors' charts disclose in 1895. They feebly explain that this rise "seems to have been due" to the discovery that oil stocks were declining. It was due to quite another cause, which the professors either do not know or deliberately conceal. At the end of 1894 the Rockefellers, through the agency of the Nobels, induced the Russian refiners at Baku to restrict their export, with the result that they were able to buy up the Italian Petroleum Company, the Bremen Petroleum Company, Reith & Co. of Antwerp, and the Kerosene Company of London. These were all large distributing agencies with tank installations, hitherto engaged in selling Russian oils. The result was that the Rockefellers secured a free hand in Western Europe. For several years they had killed all competition, with the inevitable result that the price of "export oil" went up.

But as we have said, the price of "export oil" is not the true test of the Trust's influence on prices. As Miss Tarbell shows in her admirable "History of the Standard Oil Company," the real test is what the home consumer has to pay. She has conclusively proved that in the United States the Trust raised prices where there was no local competition, and only lowered them in certain areas long enough to kill off their independent competitors. "High domestic profits (she declares) are made to offset low foreign prices." In Kentucky, where there has been persistent competition, the price of kerosene was 4 cents per gallon lower than in Kansas where there was very little opposition, and this although the freight rates were only 1 cent per gallon higher from the Standard's refinery at Whiting, Indiana, to Kansas than to Kentucky. We have no space to refute in detail the professors' misrepresentation of the secret railway rebates on which the Standard originally raised its evil power; we must hurry on to the gem of their cabinet—the explanation that certain advances in oil prices have been due to the increased cost of refining. They admit that against this alleged cost there should be set the enormously increased value of the by-products which now are obtained from the crude. *But that factor is not in their chart.* They have no figures on the subject, and they do not appear to realize that such an omission renders their elaborate charts valueless. Motor spirit, paraffin wax, vaseline, lubricating oils, all the most profitable products of the process of refining are calmly ignored when considering the margin of profit between the price of kerosene and that of crude petroleum. That is the measure of this precious contribution to twentieth-century business economics.

#### PRETTY FANNY'S WAY.

"The Women Novelists." By R. BRIMLEY JOHNSON. (Collins. 6s. net.)

WHAT is the feminine note in literature, and is there any province in fiction in which women alone excel? The truest answer is probably expressed in the words of Madame de Staël when endeavoring to interview Napoleon in his bath: "Le génie ne connaît pas de sexe." High imagination overleaps the difference of sex as easily as it transcends the limitations of age and country. There is as little to show that the author of "Wuthering Heights" was a woman as that the author of "Clarissa Harlowe" was a man. Charlotte Brontë does not reveal a woman's soul in anguish with more intensity than Euripides; whilst even that most inspired of maiden aunts, Jane Austen, in her conspicuously feminine preoccupation with the minutiae of behavior and manners is no more than the rival of Henry James. No; neither in literature nor in politics is there any justification for a Woman's Party. Nevertheless, there is a good deal to be said for the conclusions at which Mr. Brimley Johnson has arrived after a critical survey of the woman novelists from 1752 to 1880. There is a quality, or combination of qualities, which most people agree to describe as feminine; there are feminine interests, and there are writers (though not all of them are women) who have endeavored to mirror the world through feminine eyes. Something of a common standpoint seems to be maintained by the majority of the novelists who have come together in Mr. Brimley Johnson's book. "Woman," he tells us, "is a moral realist, and her realism is not inspired by any idle ideal of art, but by sympathy with art. Jane Austen and Mary Mitford were compared condescendingly with Dutch painters. George Eliot claims the parallel with pride. . . . If the romance of high life has no place in these pictures, neither has the romance of crime, adventure or squalid destitution. They hold up the mirror to mediocrity. They present the parish."

A generalization which rejects the Brontës, and would cause such arch-priestesses of romance and High Life as Mrs. Radcliffe and Ouida to writhe in their graves, must necessarily be received with caution. Nevertheless, George Eliot's eloquent tribute to the Dutch painters in "Adam Bede" and the well-known advice of Jane Austen to a niece contemplating a literary career—"Three or four families in a country village is the very thing to work on"—strongly support Mr. Brimley Johnson's theory. Women novelists, on the whole, it may be admitted, have inclined to be parochial and pragmatic, to be more concerned with manners than with movements, and to have produced their happiest effects more from observation of actual experience than from the exercise of pure imagination. Their art is less disturbed by the impulses of curiosity or rebellion; their criticism of life is practical rather than philosophic. So much may be granted of the normal women; and Fanny Burney, Mrs. Inchbald, Jane Austen, Maria Edgeworth, Hannah More, Miss Ferrier, Miss Mitford, Mrs. Gaskell, and George Eliot were normal in everything except their gifts. The exceptions, of course, are the Brontës, those star-like souls whose literary genius followed no tradition and left no successors. It is possibly owing to their refusal to conform to any common classification that the chapter devoted to the Brontës is the weakest in Mr. Brimley Johnson's book. Criticism on these sisters has a bad history behind it, from the article on "Jane Eyre" in the "Quarterly" (on "The Green-eyed Heroines") to the review by the ineffable Lockhart condemning the "repulsive vulgarity" of "Wuthering Heights." Mr. Brimley Johnson follows these backward steps perhaps more closely than he realises when he describes the iron-souled heroines Jane Eyre, Shirley, and Lucy Snow as "door-mats," and observes that the characterization of Charlotte Brontë is "disturbed by a somewhat morbid analysis of unusual passion."

On the fine art of Jane Austen Mr. Brimley Johnson has much that is sympathetic and illuminating to tell us; and a special chapter is devoted to the less known novels "Lady Susan" and "The Watsons." That Miss Austen was a great admirer of the author of "Cecilia" readers of "Northanger Abbey" do not need to be reminded. Many people, however, will learn for the first time that a large number of the plots and characters of Jane Austen were suggested by the novels of Fanny Burney; that when Mary



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Bennet, who was "a great reader and made extracts," improved the occasion of her sister Lydia's elopement, her aphorism on the fragility of a woman's reputation is borrowed from a letter by Mr. Villars in "Evelina"; whilst the actual title, "Pride and Prejudice," is a quotation from "Cecilia." The affinity between the two writers is markedly feminine; Evelina, the first woman's heroine to fall in love with little or no encouragement, finds a successor in Catherine Moorland, whose girlish admiration for the delightful Tilney, is the cause, and not the consequence, of his affection for her.

The prompt, amazing and well-merited success of Fanny Burney fosters the illusion that an age which instantly acclaimed "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" and "Evelina" was a better judge of literature than the readers of "Raymond" or "Sonia." But the inability of Jane Austen to run into more than a very few editions in her lifetime and the total failure of Emily Brontë is a reassurance that the public is at least no duller than it was. In some aspects it may even be said to have grown brighter. Madame d'Arblay survived Jane Austen by more than twenty years. She lived into the era of Dickens and Thackeray, and died in the year of the publication of Browning's "Sordello." Yet the world described in "Evelina" seems removed from that described in "Emma" by centuries. Jane Austen's novels are only superficially old-fashioned: their placid atmosphere lingers still in many a country rectory; their records of the timeless platitudes and eternal trivialities of normal English life have never grown stale. But the manners in "Evelina" should teach us to think more kindly of the gentlemanly traditions of the despised Victorian age. It is not the ball, the ridotto, the smirking beaux, the mercer's shops where male milliners "seemed to understand every part of a woman's dress better than we do ourselves," the late hours and the empty talk of fashionable society that have so conspicuously changed; but the boorishness of Captain Mirvan, the brutal and violent horseplay inflicted on Madame Duval, an elderly and unprotected foreign lady—the horseplay which convulsed Dr. Johnson and made him clamor for more of "the little Burney's humor"—this underlying savagery gives "Evelina" a curiously musty flavor. Evelina herself, however, is a perpetual fount of youth. The heroine of "Sensibility" with her blushes and tremors, her frizzed and padded head "full of powder and black pins, with a great cushion on the top of it, her tight bodice and voluminous hoop, bears little superficial resemblance to our cropped-haired, waistless Joans and Betties, doing men's work in the sensible garment the very mention of which would have made our great-grandmothers swoon. Yet Evelina remains the eternal *débutante*; her heart-beats at the sight of the exquisite Orville will find an echo in the bosoms of sweet seventeen of every generation, and the novel itself be enjoyed by readers of both sexes long after the bad paper of our "good sellers" has happily crumbled into dust.

#### RECONSTRUCTION AND BARRICADES.

"**Britain after the Peace: Revolution or Reconstruction.**"  
By BROUGHAM VILLIERS. (Fisher Unwin. 8s. 6d.)  
"**Labor and Capital after the War.**" By A NUMBER OF  
WRITERS. (Murray. 6s.)  
"**Allotments for All: The Story of a Great Movement.**"  
By GERALD W. BUTCHER. (Allen & Unwin. 2s.)

If the Minister of Reconstruction were to spend his days studying the literature of the subject he could not keep pace with the flow of books and pamphlets. Three times a day the problems of peace are solved by an expert. In these three books all the things immediately to be done when the armies cease from fighting, and look around for some other employment, are considered. The title of Mr. Villiers's book implies revolution and reconstruction as alternatives, but his scheme of reconstruction itself would turn the wheels of society in another direction. The war having caused a revolution in the practice of life of every individual, whether in the Army or out of it, we must

inevitably face a revolution in ideas on the day when we begin upon the wreckage of the past to re-create a new world. One refreshing consideration in Mr. Villiers's survey of *post-bellum* affairs, which we have seen in no other dissertation on reconstruction, is of the possibilities of street fighting. He does not regard it as due altogether to differences of national character that a British riot is easily suppressed, whereas the mob of Paris has always been a dangerous revolutionary force. Every Frenchman is a soldier who knows something of tactics, but "only a small proportion of British workers have been trained to fight, and probably very few of them have the slightest idea how to form or man barricades. . . . But in every Labor trouble for the next generation a very large proportion of those concerned will be veteran soldiers; not a few of them probably men who have held commissions and been entrusted with commands on active service." And it must not be forgotten that "they have actually been engaged in killing people for three years, in obtaining their will by force and violence"; which may be the unconscious reason why certain people talk about "peace offensives."

Mr. Villiers, as a civilized man, wishes to avoid the barricades, and unfolds a plan of peaceful revolution in "due form of law." He is a lucid and convincing writer, who has knowledge of economic laws and industrial processes. His scheme of Army demobilization is on the principle that no soldier shall be discharged until he finds a job. Heavy taxation of the rich must solve the gigantic finance problem: "So far as legislation can effect it, every penny of the war debt, interest, and ultimately the principle, should be laid upon the shoulders of those who can afford to bear it without degradation of life." The stranglehold of the landlords on rural development must be broken, and a National Works Department must get desirable work done or re-done, one of its functions being the systematic reconstruction of our cities and towns in such a way that they may be worthy of a great nation.

"Labour and Capital After the War" is a book of essays by various writers, all of whom understand the likelihood of disorder if reform is left to the misdirection of self-seeking and unimaginative politicians. There is unanimity in their recognition of the necessity of action, if they do not agree upon the action itself. The reader can study their different remedies and take his choice. The Bishop of Birmingham discusses moral unrest and immoral rest; Mr. J. R. Clynes, methods of avoiding strikes and lock-outs; Lord Leverhulme, his scheme of a six-hours' working day; Miss A. Mary Anderson, women in industry; Mr. R. H. Tawney, a new industrial system altogether, with industry conceived by the nation as a social function (the best thought-out contribution to the book); Mr. F. Dudley Docker (superfluously pointing out that he makes no claim to originality or freshness), the need of instilling thrift and house-pride in the wives of the workers, besides fostering, somehow, the idea of partnership between worker and employer; Mr. B. Seetham Rowntree, the democratization of management; and Mr. F. S. Button, Sir Hugh Bell, Miss A. Susan Lawrence, and Professor S. J. Chapman, the editor, various other aspects of industrial progress.

The simple solution of the land problem applied by the Russian peasant was adopted also on a small scale by our own anti-Bolshevik Government, without vision of its ultimate consequences, when it invoked the Defence of the Realm Act to appropriate land for the use of thousands of allotment workers. It was in some ways the most drastic act of socialisation ever enacted in this country. Land-hungry workers have converted the waste places of England into gardens. Mr. Butcher has compiled a useful record of the achievement, and he pleads for the permanent accessibility of the land to the community and its preservation in a state of fertility.

With the exception of Mr. Villiers, none of these writers hints that there is any real solution of these problems except with peace, and the preservation of peace. An early settlement of the war is essential to the working of any of these schemes of social regeneration, and their success depends on the extinction of a sense of social life corrupted by commercialism and imperialism.

IT IS A PEACE WHICH PASSETH ALL  
UNDERSTANDING.

There are vacant places, glad voices that can never again echo except in the silence of our hearts. There are our boys who will come back to us, some to take their place among us, some who are broken in this world's tragedy. Can the column of stone or marble sufficiently portray their glorious deeds, their sacrifices, the pitiful sufferings they have endured for the sake of their country?

There are the men, women, and children who will pay the toll of the terrific struggle which the world has endured. Little children born in the hours of the world's torment, or those old enough to realize the horrors of the raids, the women who have watched and waited and have never despaired, who have given up tearlessly their dearest for sacrifice with a brave heart, yet filled with anguish. If you have paid the greatest price of all by the loss of your boy, make a memorial to him by a donation or a subscription, or even by endowing a ward, and consecrate your own little shrine with your boy's name engraved upon its doors, that those who receive benefit and cure within its walls may remember with gratitude a comrade's sacrifice. Answer the call as your boy did, whether it be as a gift of gladness or as a remembrance of your life's tragedy. . . . Answer it! His last thought as he went over the top was of you. How glad and proud you are that he went. His deeds have made this a country of deathless fame. He has come back shattered, . . . broken, . . . or he has not come back at all.

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## BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"**Pages and Portraits from the Past: The Private Papers of Sir William Hotham.**" By A. M. W. STIRLING. 2 Vols. (Jenkins. 24s. net.)

SIR WILLIAM HOOTHAM was thoughtful enough, in the leisure hours of a long and eventful life, to fill many volumes with his reminiscences, and with pen-portraits of contemporary characters, and these characters include Napoleon, Nelson, George III., George IV., and William IV. His recollections include the Mutiny at the Nore and the Battle of Camperdown. The author has compiled two entertaining volumes from these MSS., and promises us that there are more to follow. We are delighted to hear it. Sir William appears to have been a good-natured man, with no outstanding qualities. He was stiff with the prejudices of a class which was never more bigoted and ugly-minded than during the scare years when France began that revolution which is only now in its second phase. That is to say, there was much in his world which his caste and education made it impossible for him to understand. He had a test for every man: "Is he a gentleman?" As his pen-portraits betray nothing of his own standard for a gentleman, we are left puzzled but amused by his verdicts that Napoleon and Nelson were not gentlemen; but that George IV., "though from early habits of indulgence his nerves were debilitated," and "his temper was not very certain," and he "had very glaring errors in his general conduct, which, had he lived a few years longer, might have endangered the security of the Empire and the Throne"; and appears indeed to have felt more at home in the pothouse than elsewhere, yet he was "unquestionably the first gentleman of his time and . . . an ornament to Society." It must have been a pleasing Society, and the thought of it does a little to qualify a regret that, after all, Napoleon was "no gentleman" by comparison with its great exemplar. These volumes include some very interesting references to the Mutiny at the Nore. Sir William was present. It is strange reading, that in a great war a British fleet should decline to put out, should hoist the red flag, and appoint delegates from the seamen; who sat with their hats on, at a table covered with the Union Jack on which was placed a can of beer, ordering their superior officers to uncover when they approached to make a communication.

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"**The Business of Finance.**" By HARTLEY WITHERS. (Murray.)

THE charge of being "a nation of economic illiterates," which Mr. Hartley Withers justly brings against us, is nowhere more applicable than in matters of finance. Yet we are a business people and money is the nervous system of the business world. Mr. Withers, however, is not to blame. He is doing more than anybody else to lighten this darkness. In a series of volumes of popular exposition he has taken his readers through the various departments of finance—the making and exchange of money, banking, the Stock Market, and the mysteries of foreign exchange, not neglecting taxation and other aspects of public finance. This volume is a rapid survey of the whole field, with some special attention to the public and private financial situation during and after the war. It carries everywhere Mr. Withers's special virtue of lucid reasoning and apt illustration. How credit is created and operates, the explanation of a bank or an industrial balance sheet, the work of a Stock Exchange, the nature of foreign investment, the part played by gold shipments, full of mystery to the ordinary man, become simplicity itself as Mr. Withers unfolds them. The writer's zeal is heightened by a constant sense of dangers due to popular ignorance. The propertied and investing classes are everywhere liable to lose their money or to put it to foolish or wasteful uses because they will not take the trouble to understand what they are doing. The dishonesty of company-promoting and the Stock Exchanges is sustained by this folly. The general ignorance of finance is responsible for a disposition either to support any quack remedy which comes along, or to kick over the money-changers' tables in some fit of repudiation. Education is with Mr. Withers the great remedy. He does not trust much to State regulation, regarding it in most

instances as incompetent interference. Though occasionally giving a theoretical support to some radical reform, such as the proposal for an international paper currency in a League of Nations, he maintains upon the whole a conservative attitude. His severe strictures upon our war-finance are directed against definite processes of inflation, and his public finance proposals run along the familiar lateral lines of free defence of interest and profits, as rewards of meritorious revenue. His conservatism appears in his rather naive defence of interest and profits, as rewards of meritorious saving and direction of industry, his apparently whole-hearted belief in a wage-fund, and a belief in the possibility and desirability of all workers becoming capitalists. He nowhere faces the possibility of the early disappearance of effective competition from banking and other departments of finance, or the iniquity of the "heads I win, tails you lose" game which the banks play with the Government and the taxpayer. He does not think that the scarcity of capital after the war will necessarily be severe or last long, or that governmental restrictions upon the nature and cause of investments need be lasting.

## The Week in the City.

EASIER conditions in the Money Market are attributed to Government disbursements, and on Tuesday day-to-day loans were as low as 2½ per cent. Foreign exchanges have weakened somewhat, and the Swiss exchange is little better than 23 francs to the pound. This indicates that the financial difficulties of the Allied Powers may be serious, especially if the enormous war expenditure continues unchecked. Apparently, our Government is too much concerned about the election to take much interest in the tens, and perhaps, hundreds of millions which might be saved by speeding up the demobilisation. Taking the last two weeks together, there was actually an increase of 2½ millions in the Government's disbursements. Employers are getting many letters from the front from men who want to be taken back. Unfortunately, very few of the patriotic substitutes want to relinquish the posts which they have taken up in order to release men for the front. Some of the Coalition candidates are already declaring that Germany must be made to pay for the war. The old talk about the National Debt being no burden because the interest is paid to our own people, has been dropped, and the "Evening Standard" has discovered that the annual charge for interest and sinking fund on the National Debt is already £393,448,000. So by Christmas the interest on the National Debt will be double the whole national expenditure before the war.

The Stock Markets remain depressed. Perhaps the best commercial news of the week is the sweeping reductions that have been made in freights. Thus, in the North American ports to the United Kingdom, freights have dropped from 230s. to 55s. per ton.

## CONSOLIDATED GOLD FIELDS.

A continuance of the necessity to provide largely for depreciation of securities is the great financial obstacle with which the Consolidated Gold Fields has to contend. The report for the year ended June 30th last shows that for this purpose no less than £388,348 had to be set aside, while the directors further consider it necessary to allow £317,459 for contingencies. To make these appropriations possible, the whole of the reserve fund of £600,000 is transferred to profit and loss. The remaining £105,808 comes out of the year's profits, which, after paying debenture interest and all charges, amounted to £412,540, or some £34,000 less than in 1916-17. Government taxes and the preference dividends absorbed £155,043, and the ordinary dividend, at last year's rate of 7½ per cent, free of tax, £150,000, leaving to be carried forward to the current year's accounts £60,095, which is slightly higher than a year ago. The report states "that the company's investments show at current market prices, and on a conservative estimate of unquoted investments, an unrealised profit of over £1,000,000."

## THE STRAND HOTEL.

The Strand Hotel Company, which owns the Strand Palace and the Regent Palace Hotels, and whose construction of a new hotel at Baker Street is "held in abeyance by the Metropolitan Railway in accordance with national policy," slightly increased its profits in the year ended September 30th, the figures being £111,787 against £108,506 in the previous year. The Debenture service claims £13,760, as last year, but the depreciation allowance is raised from £26,000 to £33,500. Distributions are at the same rate as last year. The 7 per cent. Preference dividend absorbs £21,000, while the participating Preferred Ordinary get 5½ per cent., which amounts to £20,700, the exact sum which is also distributed on the ordinary shares. The balance carried forward is some £2,000 higher at £24,420.

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